

OUR PARKS OUR FUTURE

AUSTIN PARKS & RECREATION LONG RANGE PLAN



2018-2028

WRT in Collaboration with:
PROS Consulting, Inc, Studio Balcones, Civic Arts,
Adisa Communications, ETC Institute, The Trust for Public Land

Revised Draft for City Council Review
October 21, 2019



**AUSTIN
PARKS
FOUNDATION**



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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- + African American Resources Advisory Commission
- + Arts Commission

- + Asian American Quality of Life Advisory Commission
- + Austin Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities
- + Austin Travis County Food Policy Board
- + Bicycle Advisory Council
- + Commission for Women
- + Commission on Seniors
- + Community Development Commission
- + Downtown Commission
- + Early Childhood Council
- + Environmental Commission
- + Hispanic/Latino Quality of Life Resource Advisory Commission
- + Land, Facilities and Program Committee of the Parks and Recreation Board
- + LGBTQ Quality of Life Advisory Commission
- + Mexican American Cultural Center Advisory Board
- + Pedestrian Advisory Council
- + Planning Commission
- + Urban Transportation Commission

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- + PROS Consulting Inc.
- + Studio Balcones
- + Adisa Communications
- + Civic Arts
- + The Trust for Public Land
- + ETC Institute

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A special thank you to the many community members who participated in the planning process and contributed to *Our Parks, Our Future*.

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Runners in Austin.
Source: PARD

PURPOSE & BACKGROUND

REVISED DRAFT FOR REVIEW

Our Parks, Our Future is the City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department's Long Range Plan for Land, Facilities, and Programs. This plan, developed every ten years, is the guiding document for park system planning and growth in Austin and creates the foundation for individual park master plans and capital projects. The LRP was informed by a collaborative process with Austin residents, park partners, elected officials, and other stakeholders.

IN THIS CHAPTER

AUSTIN'S PARKS AND RECREATION STORY

- + Introduction
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WHY PLAN?

- + Parks are Important
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AUSTIN'S PARKS & RECREATION STORY

PARD'S MISSION

PARD'S MISSION IS TO INSPIRE AUSTIN TO LEARN, PLAY, PROTECT, AND CONNECT BY CREATING DIVERSE PROGRAMS AND EXPERIENCES IN SUSTAINABLE NATURAL SPACES AND PUBLIC PLACES.

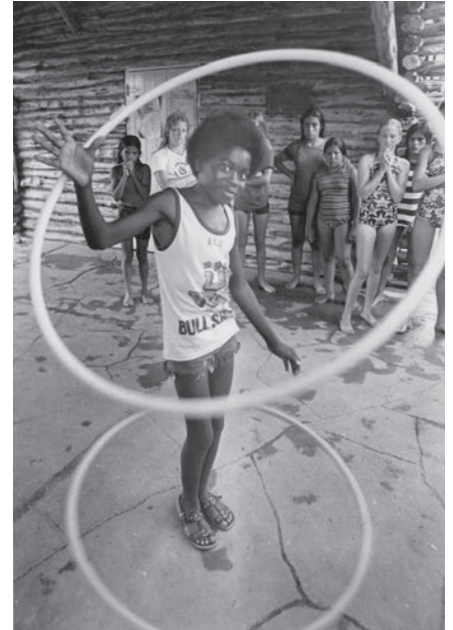
AS AUSTIN EXPERIENCES POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT GROWTH, DEMOGRAPHIC SHIFTS, AND CHANGES IN RECREATIONAL PREFERENCES, THE PARK AND RECREATION SYSTEM MUST EVOLVE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF ALL RESIDENTS.



INTRODUCTION

Austin has long been referred to as a “city within a park.” Its unique natural features form the city’s diverse landscape – green, rolling hills, dramatic topography, and striking waterways. The City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) protects and maintains our parkland and urban forest, and offers a variety of sports, recreation, educational and art programs, cultural opportunities, nature and aquatic activities for the ongoing enjoyment of residents and visitors.

Every ten years, PARD prepares the Long Range Plan (LRP) for Land, Facilities, and Programs. The *Our Parks, Our Future* LRP is essentially a blueprint for how the department prepares individual park master plans, land acquisition, and capital improvements and develops programs and new amenities. This LRP builds on and updates the previous LRP prepared by PARD and adopted in 2010.



Hula hooping in Shipe Park, 1972
Source: Austin History Center,
Austin Public Library

Austin’s green spaces have never been static; PARD will celebrate its centennial in 2028, marking a period in which Austin created a park system with a variety of park types, active recreation, greenbelts, and trails, as the city’s population and economy experienced tremendous growth. *Our Parks, Our Future* provides the opportunity to reflect on the past and provide a community-based vision for the future, a vision for 2028 and beyond.





OUR GOALS

PARD manages 20,000+ acres of land and water, 17,343 of which is dedicated parkland. PARD is the steward of 291 parks, and more than 200 miles of trails traversing the city. The City of Austin's leadership, staff, and partners are committed to involving the community in planning and decision making through a variety of means and the community's voice creates the backbone of the *Our Parks, Our Future* LRP.

When this planning process kicked off in fall 2018, PARD's goals for the process included:



Planning Summit 1 Open House
Source: PARD

-  **Assess State of Current Park System**
Conduct a thorough assessment of the condition and quality of current parks to provide a strong data-driven baseline to inform prioritization and track implementation progress over time.
-  **Create a Renewed Vision for Austin's Park System in 2028**
Engage the community, stakeholders, and city staff to define a new vision that is both inspirational and achievable.
-  **Guide Future Growth and Development**
Create a guidebook for how and where to invest to ensure the park system supports our residents, employees, and visitors as Austin continues to grow and change.
-  **Develop Strategies, Actions, and Priorities that can be Implemented and Tracked**
Provide citywide strategies and priorities that will inform development of the annual Capital Improvement Program and creation of park master plans.

A LOOK BACK AT OUR PARKS

Looking to the past provides a better understanding of current conditions and an opportunity to build from PARD's roots – cultivating a stronger park system that speaks to the unique desires and needs of present-day Austin.

From its beginnings as four city squares sketched on Austin's original plat, the park system has expanded and evolved over time, with an increasing focus on preserving and protecting cultural resources as well as natural resources. The early 1900s saw the consistent expansion of the system through donations and acquisitions followed by the City of Austin's first Parks, Playground, and Boulevards Bond in 1929. The Federal Aid programs that followed the Great Depression had a major impact on shaping

and expanding Austin's park system, as did the ongoing growth in population and developed area. The park system grew through both opportunistic and systematic efforts based on the norms and resources available at the time. In recent years, the park system has come to embrace natural and cultural resources as two mutually reinforcing elements in Austin's parks.



Juneteenth Celebration in Rosewood Park
Source: Austin History Center,
Austin Public Library



Barton Springs Pool, 1947
Source: Austin History Center, Austin Public Library



Visitors at Elisabet Ney Museum, 1970s
Source: Austin History Center,
Austin Public Library



Sliding at Zilker Park, 1970s
Source: Austin History Center,
Austin Public Library

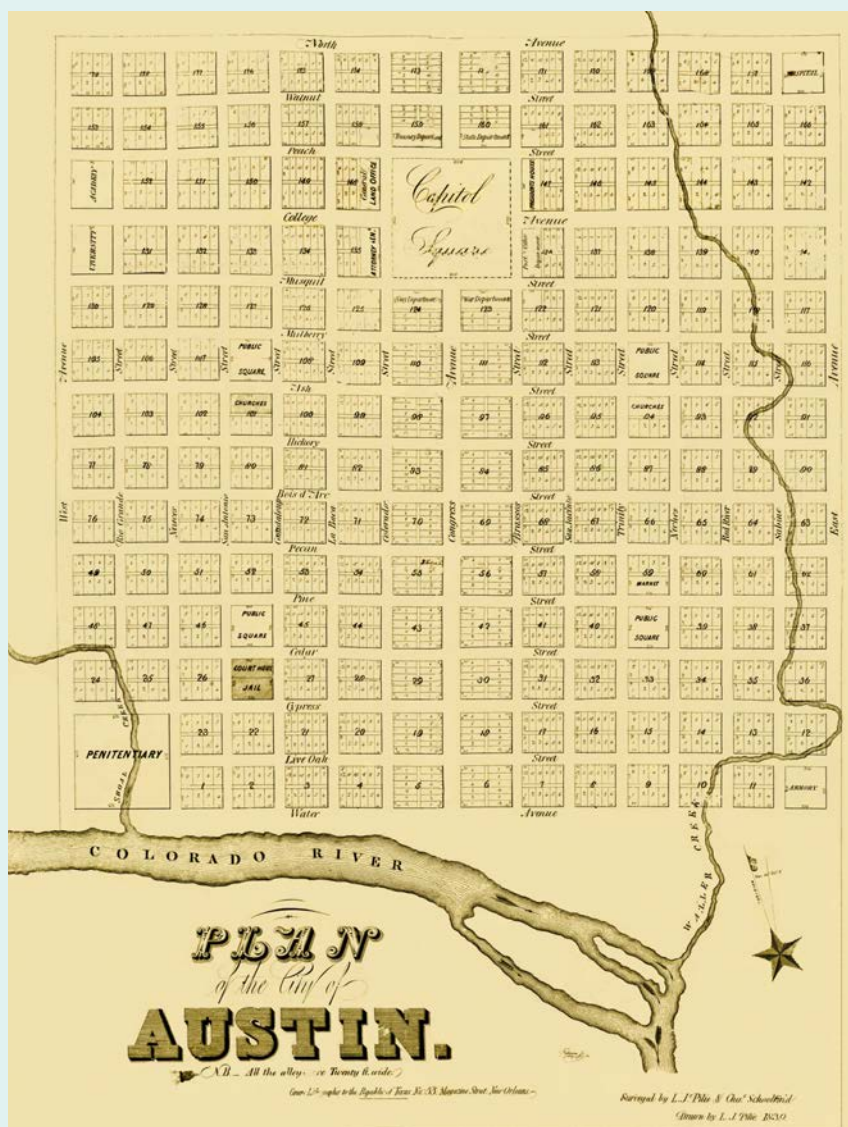
CHARACTER OF THE EARLY PARK SYSTEM

Early City Public Squares & Urban Neighborhood Parks

The earliest elements of Austin's public park system have their roots in Judge Edwin Waller's 1839 City Plat for the Republic of Texas' new capital city. This plan showed a grid radiating out from the new Capitol towards the rivers that served as boundaries, with four secondary public

squares framing the iconic ceremonial building. While the land for these four public squares was set aside for public use, there was no vision or investment framework to guide their use. As a result, these public squares remained largely undeveloped and underutilized in their early years and in some cases even became sites of storage, garbage dumps, parking lots, or other city services – in sharp contrast to their intended purpose. Three of these historic

squares (Wooldridge, Republic and Brush Squares) survive to this day, but have required much reinvention to develop a strong character and relationship to the city around them. It is through the reinvention of these historic squares and confronting the pressures of a rapidly expanding population in the early 1900s that Austin came to define what a “neighborhood park” can and should be.



Source: Austin History Center, Austin Public Library.

THE 1839 ORIGINAL “WALLER PLAN”

EDWIN WALLER'S ORIGINAL DESIGN FOR THE CITY CONSISTED OF A GRID WITH A CENTRAL SQUARE (CAPITOL SQUARE) AND FOUR SMALLER PUBLIC SQUARES.

THE REMAINING THREE ARE NOW KNOWN AS BRUSH, REPUBLIC, AND WOOLDRIDGE.

Contrast of Large Natural Areas & Neighborhood Parks

Waller's 1839 City Plat also set the stage for an enduring and dynamic contrast within the Austin park system – between the magnetic expanse of the rivers and natural areas and the need for more intimate, programmed urban spaces. These two elements remain embedded in the DNA of Austin's park system.

Austin's affinity for parks began with the recognition of the inherent value of the wild ravines and water features that framed the city and a love of outdoor athletics. The evolution of the park system has provided Austin with a unique network of metropolitan scale parks, athletic facilities, greenbelts, and nature preserves, but it has taken time and creativity for the city's smaller parks to find a clear identity and character that can offer a more intimate community-centric recreation experience as a counterpoint to the beloved destination parks within the system.

The Birth of the Austin Parks & Recreation System

1928 was a major turning point for the Austin Parks and Recreation System. In 1928, there was a series of critical civic actions taken to shape the future of the system. In this one-year period, the City of Austin not only planned for and funded the build-out of the physical park system, but also formalized two separate entities, which would eventually merge to become PARD; the first focused on programming and the second focused on physical projects.

1928 Recreation Department

The Recreation Department was founded after two years of volunteer work and devoted advocacy by the Austin Lions Club and Kiwanis Club of Austin. It was tasked with running public athletics programs and supervising playgrounds.

1928 First Citywide Plan since 1839 City Plat

A City Plan for Austin, Texas was released. The plan made a broad statement emphasizing the importance and role of parks, justified the need for public sector involvement and investment, and called for the development of a citywide park system. Many of the foundational elements of Austin's park system were defined in this plan, including the four park types that continue to be core elements of the system. This plan was also a

major driver for the codified racial segregation of Austin into east and west of present day IH-35, which led to lasting negative impacts including immense economic, environmental, and social inequity. The parks and recreation system was shaped by this institutionalized racism.

1928 First City Parks Bond

The City issued its first Parks, Playground, and Boulevards Bond, a \$750,000 bond for improvement of the system based on the recommendations in the 1928 City Plan.

1928 Parks & Playgrounds Commission

The Parks & Playgrounds Commission was formed in response to the vision laid out in the 1928 City Plan and 1928 Bond. This commission was an advisory body tasked with assisting the City Council and City Manager in the acquisition and improvement of all public parks, playgrounds, and boulevards.

PARD still displays a clear double lineage – one as the strategic entity responsible for planning, acquisition, and improvement of physical spaces and the other as the manager of public programs that take place in those same physical spaces. The park type definitions found in the 1928 plan are in many ways industry-defining and prescient, and have endured to the present day: the (school) playground designed for universal walkable access

to supervised play space; the play field to be spaced farther apart with specific sports and programs in mind; the multi-functional neighborhood park to be within walking distance of everyone in the city; and finally the metro park, boulevard or greenbelt to be chosen for their natural advantages and scenic pleasures as a reprieve at the periphery of more urbanized areas. Many cities would not arrive at a classification scheme and set of benchmarks (such as ½ mile constituting the maximum walking distance to a school playground or neighborhood park) for another 50 years.

Unfortunately, like many early planning efforts and government programs, the good ideas of the 1928 Citywide Plan (like the park classification scheme and associated performance standards), were intertwined with and predicated upon systemic segregation of facilities and parks. PARD is therefore continuing to work to overcome the 1928 plan's legacy of segregation and inequity in every aspect of the parks and recreation system. Moving forward, PARD is committed to ensuring that all Austinites have equitable access to quality parks regardless of race and ethnicity. Likewise, PARD is proactively working to increase the diversity of participation in PARD programs through more geographically and culturally diverse offerings and more extensive outreach and advertising of these offerings.



PARD & THE NEW DEAL: A FORMATIVE PARTNERSHIP

AUSTIN BEGAN ITS FIRST COORDINATED EFFORT TO EXPAND THE CITY'S PUBLIC PARK SYSTEM JUST AS THE FEDERAL NEW DEAL PROGRAMS WERE BEGINNING TO BE IMPLEMENTED.

AS A RESULT OF THIS ALIGNMENT OF NATIONAL CAPACITY AND LOCAL OPPORTUNITY, THE CITY OF AUSTIN RECEIVED AN UNPRECEDENTED INFUSION OF FEDERAL FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT FOR THE BUILD-OUT OF ITS PARK SYSTEM. BUT, THIS FEDERAL SUPPORT WAS NOT FELT EVENLY NOR DISTRIBUTED EQUITABLY - THESE FEDERAL RESOURCES OFTEN REINFORCED SEGREGATION AND HAD A DISPROPORTIONATELY NEGATIVE IMPACT ON COMMUNITIES OF COLOR WHILE ENHANCING CITY RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO WHITE RESIDENTS AND VISITORS.

AUSTIN'S ICONIC NEW DEAL STRUCTURES AND ARTWORKS SERVE AS A PHYSICAL REMINDER OF THIS FORMATIVE PARTNERSHIP - ITS ENTANGLED FLAWS AND TRIUMPHS. IT ALSO PUSHED THE AUSTIN PARK SYSTEM (AND LATER, PARD) TO ADOPT THE NEW DEAL VISION OF PUBLIC PARKS AS ECONOMIC, ENVIRONMENTAL, AND SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORTING U.S. CITY LIFE.



Zilker Park (1938)
Source: Austin History Center, Austin Public Library

PARK SYSTEM GROWTH

THIS TIMELINE TRACKS SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN'S PARK SYSTEM FROM 1839 TO TODAY.



Zilker Botanical Gardens
Source: PARD



Palm Park Swimming Pool, 1941
Source: Austin History Center,
Austin Public Library

**HOUSE PARK
(AISD)**
1903

Parkland (1840)

41

1839

1875

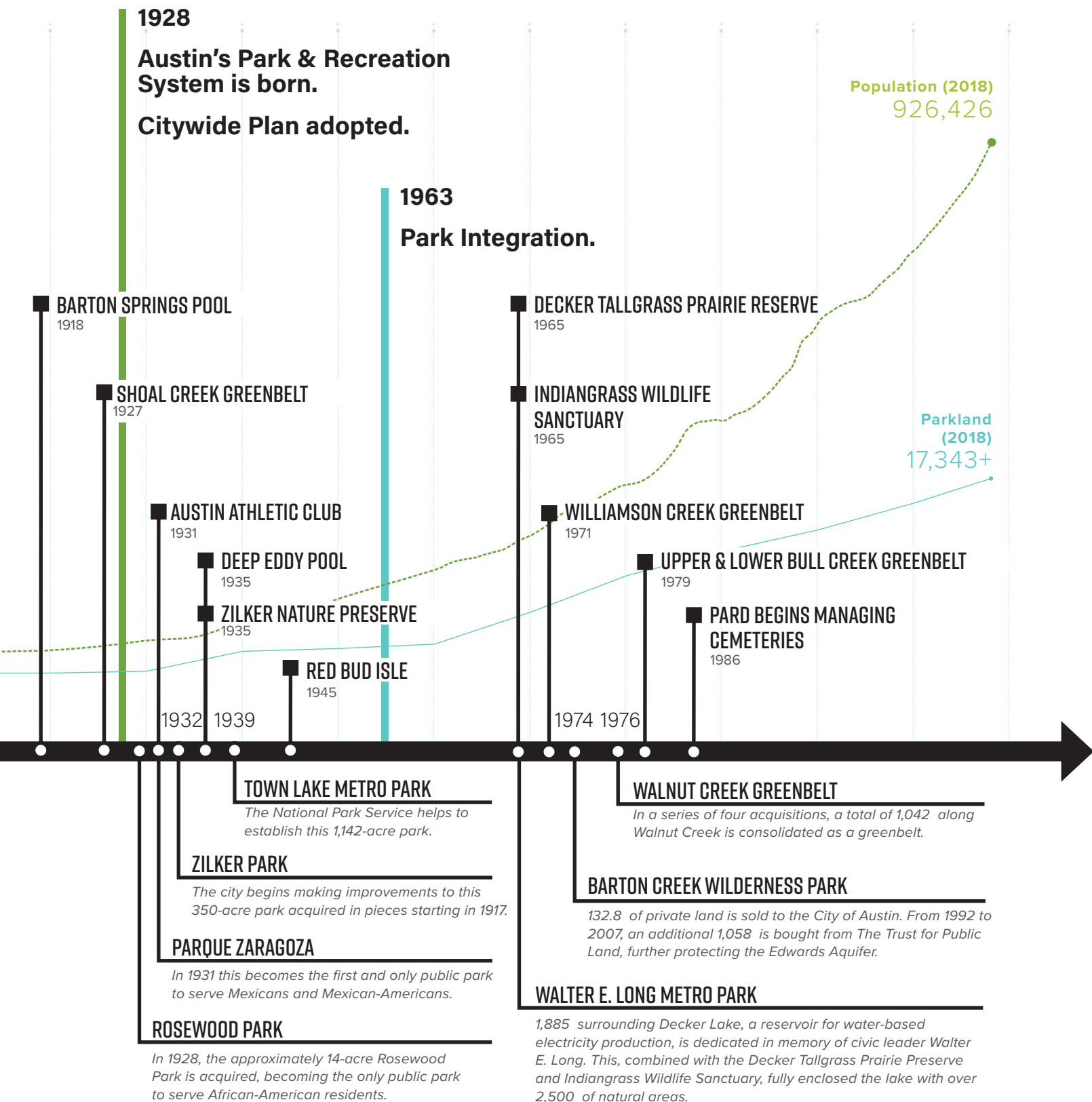
NOTABLE ADDITIONS TO THE PARK SYSTEM

FOUR HISTORIC SQUARES

Edwin Waller's City Plat in 1839 establishes four historic city squares, which form the core open space network: Northeast Public Square (no longer extant), Bell (Wooldridge) Square, Hemphill (Republic) Square, and Brush Square. Originally just common land, over the period from 1840-1920, these squares are gradually improved for public use except the Northeast Public Square, which was ultimately developed for educational use and later a church.

PEASE PARK

Approximately 23 of this 42-acre site were donated to the City of Austin by former Governor of Texas, Elisha M. Pease, and his wife. Improvements to the park began in the early 1900s. These early improvements were supplemented by a public-private partnership that began investing in 1926, then by New Deal Programs in the 1930s. Now known for the much-loved "Eeyore's Birthday Party" Event, which was moved to this location in 1974.



DEVELOPMENT PHASES

The evolution of Austin's park system can be organized into four key phases of development, each characterized by a common administrative, political, and/or cultural focus.

1839-1920

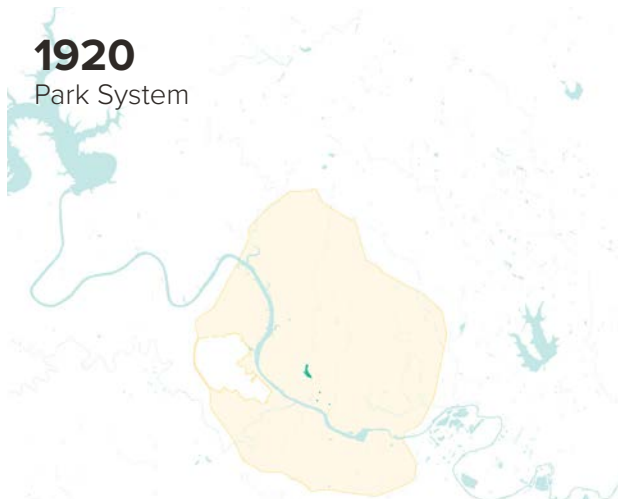
Sporadic Emergence of Core Structure

The Edwin Waller's City Plat in 1839 establishes a pattern of open space in Austin. This plat included four historic city squares and embedded natural features in the identity of the city by naming east-west streets after trees and north-south streets after creeks. The early park system included Wooldridge Park (first developed in 1911) and Pease Park (1875), and is complemented by cemeteries, which represent a significant portion of open space throughout this period.

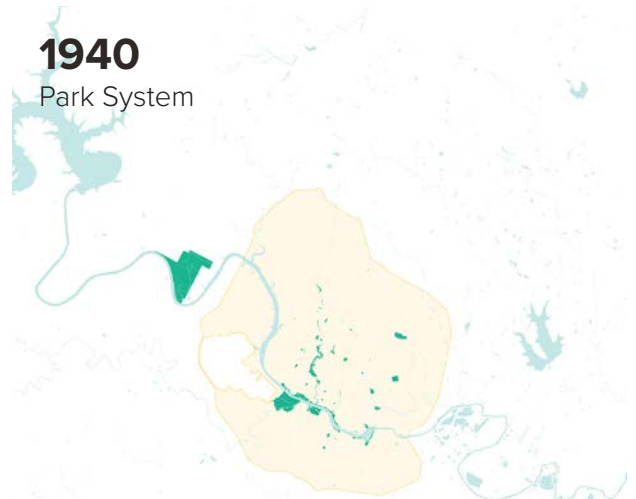
74
Parkland /1,000 People 1840

3
/1,000 People 1910

1920 Park System



1940 Park System



This is what 20 years of PARD impact looks like.

From 1930 to 1940 Austin's population surged from just over 50,000 to about 90,000 – a 70% increase. In that same time park per 1,000 people increased from 5 in 1930 to 23 in 1940 – a 360% increase. This increase illustrates the impact of PARD's early systematic and strategic approach. This expansion, however, took place under a racially segregated and unequal framework and so while the scale of expansion was impressive, the method and motivation (and therefore the impact) was unjust.

1920-
1940

**Systematic
Investment +
Federal Aid**

A local effort to improve parks, playgrounds, and boulevards begins and is reinforced by the federal New Deal programs.

During this period both local and federal government supported racial and ethnic segregation and so the massive, systemic investment of this period entrenched the persistent inequity in access to quality parks and recreation resources, assets and programs in Austin.

23

/1,000 People 1940

1940-
1970

**Active
Recreation
+ Gardens**

The city invests in a wide array of pools, fields, and athletic facilities. Several botanical and cultural gardens are also created.

1970-
2017

**Consolidation,
Greenbelts + Cultural
Heritage Preservation**

PARD makes several large-scale acquisitions of greenbelts along creeks and valleys. A new focus on adaptive reuse and intentional preservation of cultural resources and significant civic sites begins. The city takes on ownership and management of sites previously owned and managed by private entities, consolidating a wide array of parks, cemeteries and recreational assets into one system.

1963

Park Integration.

26

/1,000 People 1980

20

/1,000 People 2018

1970

Park System

2017

Park System

1928

**Austin's Park & Recreation
System is born.**

Citywide Plan adopted.

WHY PLAN?

PARKS ARE IMPORTANT

Parks and public spaces play a central role in how Austinites experience the city. They bring people together, offer recreational opportunities for residents, and provide critical environmental benefits that improve the quality of our air, water, and soils and help keep us cooler. Extensive research documents the varied benefits provided by public spaces, including improved physical and mental health, increased community cohesion, additional economic benefits, and elevated environmental services.

Parks also have a critical role to play in providing a living laboratory for communities to learn more about nature and the environment. Early hands-on education in parks and open spaces spurs the imagination of children and creates life-long stewards of our natural lands and habitat.



Parks provide economic, public health, environmental, community, and educational value

Parks provide hands-on environmental education

- + Exposure to the outdoors improves children's analytical thinking and problem solving
- + Summer activities and education in parks can help to close opportunity gaps



Parks support economic & community values

- + Redeveloped parks can reduce vacancy rates and increase safety
- + Increased social connections and community cohesion can combat the impacts of social isolation and loneliness (The Trust for Public Land Healthy Parks Plan)



Active Recreation. Source: PARD

“Parks are vital to the health and enrichment of our communities, from teaching children to be stewards of their natural environments, to keeping residents of all ages healthy, happy, and connected.”

JANE RIVERA, PhD

*City of Austin PARD
Board Chair, 2011-2019*

The impact of parks cannot not be underestimated. According to the *City Parks Alliance*, today’s urban parks act as “green engines to help address nearly every critical urban need from health to housing, to education and environmental justice, and countering sprawl to combating crime.” These dynamic spaces are now being recognized as powerful tools for cities to address 21st century challenges including the environmental and social impacts associated with climate change and public health issues affecting our communities.

WE'RE EXPERIENCING GROWTH & CHANGE

Austin is a city that is growing and changing. As the city grows it is important to ensure that our parks and recreation system is able to expand and adapt as needed. In the past, Austin's periods of rapid growth have coincided with the availability and increased capacity of the national government to support and guide local land acquisition and development of parks. This time, Austin needs to lead this effort on its own behalf.

In 2012, the city adopted *Imagine Austin*, a new comprehensive plan and vision for how we can better anticipate and manage continued growth in a way that provides opportunities for all residents. City Council then adopted a shorter-term *Strategic Direction 2023* plan that focuses on outcomes, including strategies, to create equitable access to parks, trails, open space, and recreational opportunities as the city grows. Key elements include reducing walking distances to parks, acquiring new land for parks, and managing a growing demand for facilities and programming.



68%

of new development has occurred in the city's activity centers & corridors (since 2012)



Population and developed land are both increasing

Imagine Austin has helped to focus and direct new growth into activity centers and corridors. However, the city continues to spread out as population in surrounding counties and cities increases.



Need for parkland is on the rise

As Austin's population and economy continue to grow, the demand for park space and recreational facilities is increasing as well. PARD manages over 291 parks, 26 recreation and senior centers, and a range of facilities including: natural areas, pools, splash pads, tennis courts, soccer fields, and playgrounds.



Population within walking distance of parks increasing but still below city's goal

65% of Austin residents are now within a ten-minute walk of a park, a significant increase from 2011.



Improving parkland access

Austin's park per 1,000 people peaked in 1994 at nearly 30 (its highest point since 1850). But this impressive achievement has since dropped down to only 20 park acres for every 1,000 Austin residents. The City of Austin, however, is committed to achieving a higher standard, especially within the Urban Core, which encompasses many of the densest areas of central Austin (see page 74 for more detail). In 2009, City Council set a goal of providing parkland within 1/4 mile of Urban Core residents and 1/2 mile for those outside of the Urban Core.



Keeping up with growth

First passed in 1985, the City of Austin's Parkland Dedication Ordinance was revised in 2007 and 2016 to add hotel/motel fees in addition to a new formula that requires a dedicated development fee. In 2016, Park Planning acquired 66 of new parkland.

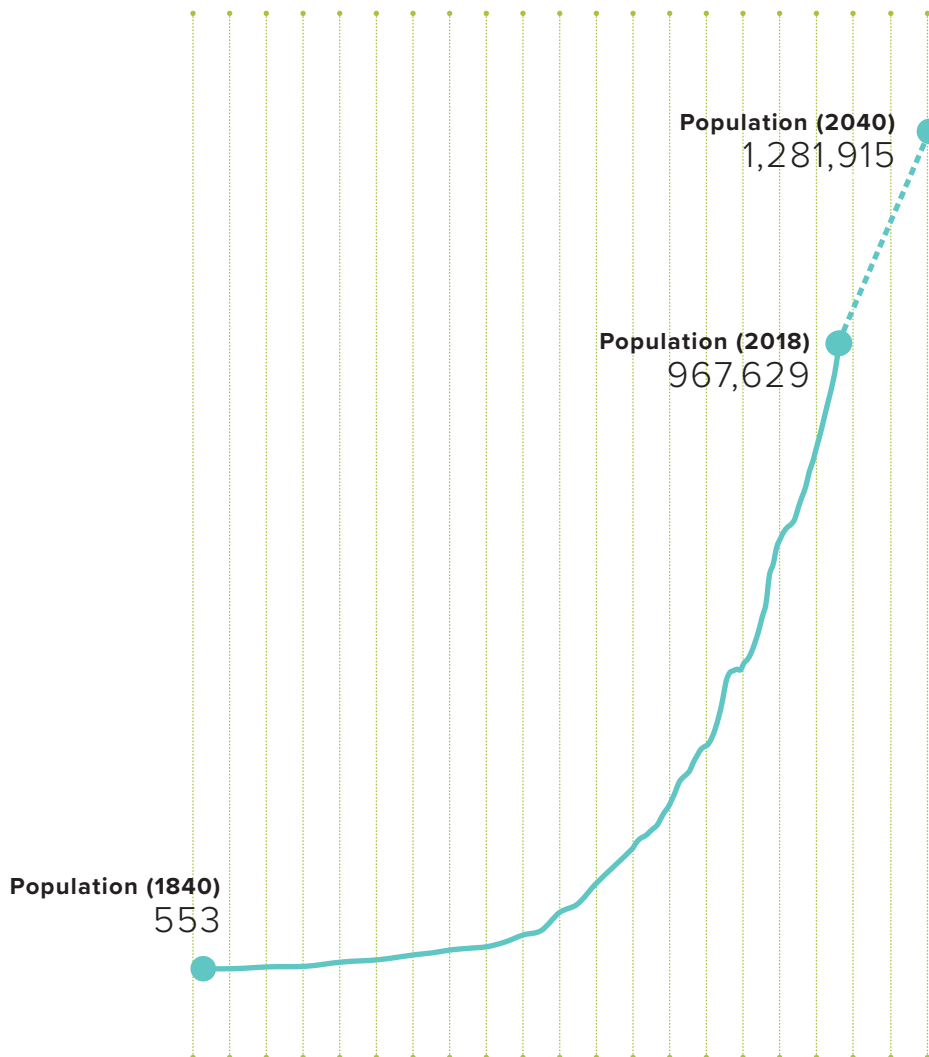


45%

population growth
projected between
2018 and 2040

80%

job growth projected
between
2018 and 2040



Data Source: City of Austin past decennial figures are from the US Census Bureau, all other annual figures - including the projected 2040 population - are internally generated estimates from City Demographer and Department of Planning for the City of Austin as of November 2018. Note: About 70% of the annual growth from 1997 to 1998 was largely the result of annexing large tracts of populated land into the City in late 1997. Population figures are as of April 1 of each year. Historical and current period population figures for the City of Austin take into account annexations that have occurred. Forecasted population figures for the City of Austin do not assume any future annexation activity.

THE IMAGINE AUSTIN VISION

“AUSTIN IS A
BEACON OF
SUSTAINABILITY,
SOCIAL EQUITY,
AND ECONOMIC
OPPORTUNITY;
WHERE DIVERSITY
AND CREATIVITY
ARE CELEBRATED;
WHERE COMMUNITY
NEEDS AND VALUES
ARE RECOGNIZED;
WHERE LEADERSHIP
COMES FROM
ITS COMMUNITY
MEMBERS AND
WHERE THE
NECESSITIES OF LIFE
ARE AFFORDABLE
AND ACCESSIBLE TO
ALL.”

IMAGINEAUSTIN
Vibrant. Livable. Connected.

ONGOING EFFORTS & OUR PARTNERS

The LRP effort is closely tied to other citywide plans, including *Imagine Austin*, the *Austin Strategic Mobility Plan*, and the *Austin Strategic Direction 2023*. As part of the planning process, relevant citywide, district, and neighborhood plans were reviewed. Since the last Long Range Plan update was completed in 2010, PARD staff and partners have been working to implement those strategies and actions, and the current status of each was

considered in completing this plan. PARD partners with other city departments, non-profit organizations, conservancies, community groups, and businesses to enhance and improve parks, increase recreational and cultural opportunities, preserve natural areas, celebrate arts and culture, and maximize the public benefit at minimum taxpayer cost. The current plans and initiatives of park partners are described in detail in Chapter 5.

Relevant citywide plans and initiatives are summarized on the following pages.



The 2018 Bond provided funding for citywide projects like affordable housing, libraries, museums, and cultural centers, transportation, and other improvements.

WHO CAN PARTNER WITH PARKS?

NEIGHBORHOOD/ COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Neighborhood, community and “friends of” groups that serve as advocates and stewards for a local park or facility

BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS

Corporations and local businesses that provide a wide range of activities including: park improvements, maintenance and management; programs and services; and donations and sponsorships

NON-PROFIT/ CONSERVANCY PARTNERSHIPS

Non-profits and conservancies that are mission aligned with PARD and dedicated to a particular park or facility, or specific types of amenities or programs throughout the parks system

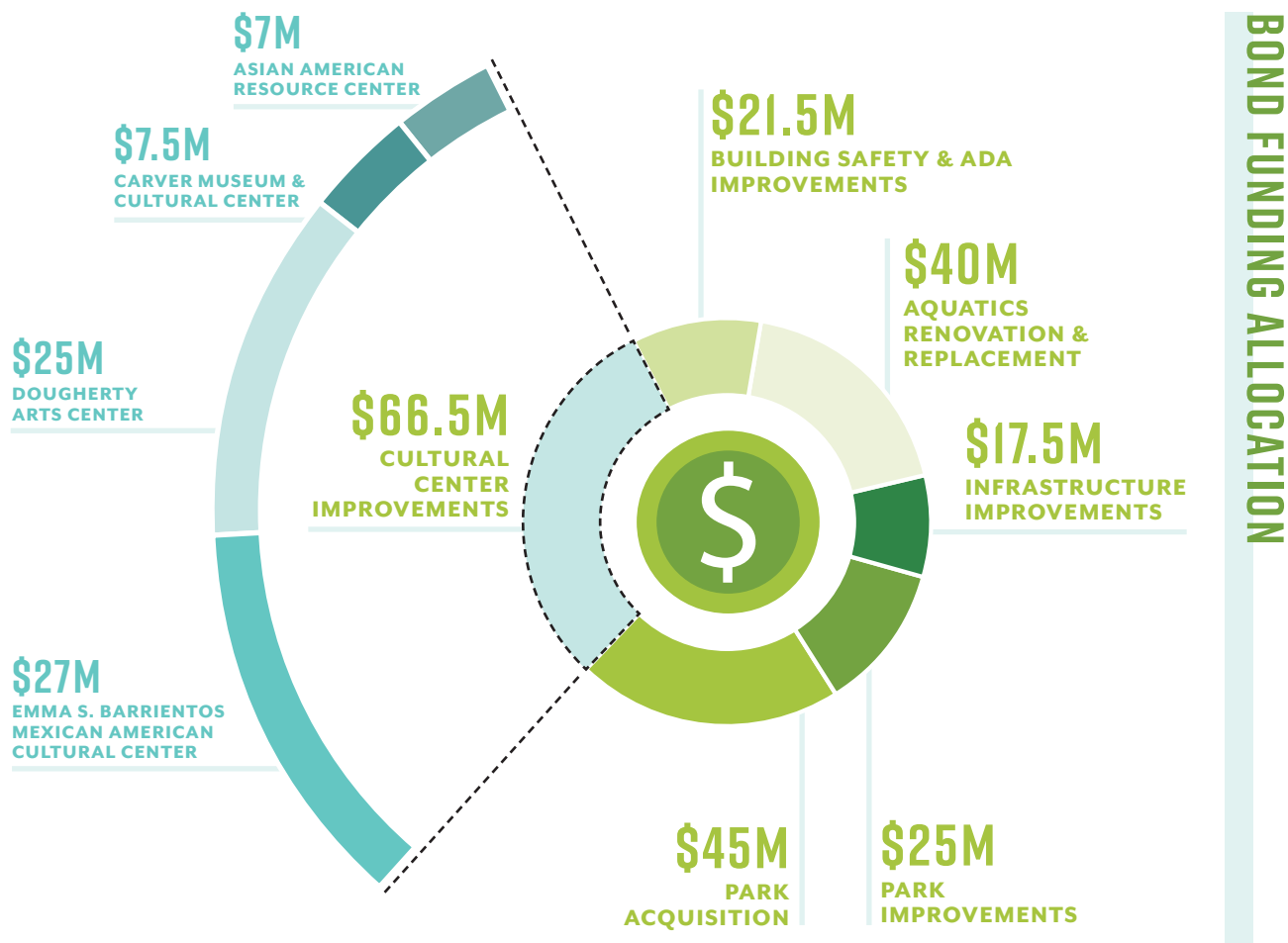
2018 BOND: OUR COMMUNITY. OUR FUTURE.

Over the course of two years, a citizen-led advisory group worked with residents, city departments, and elected officials to develop recommendations for reinvesting in current city infrastructure in areas of affordable housing, libraries and cultural centers, parks and recreation, flood mitigation and open space, health and human services, public safety, and transportation infrastructure.



Lady Bird Lake
Source: PARD

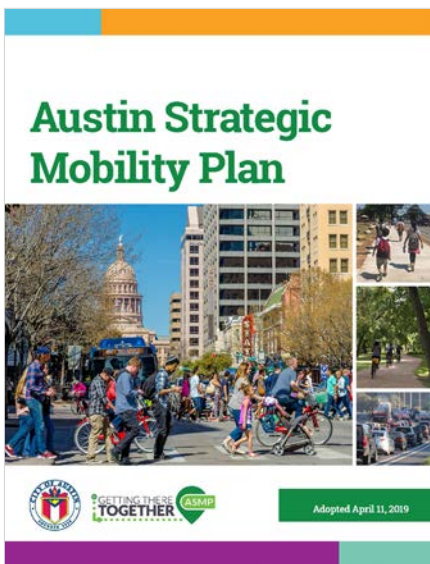
In 2018, Austin residents passed \$215.5 Million in bond funding to improve the park system & increase access.





City of Austin IMAGINE AUSTIN (2012)

Adopted in 2012, *Imagine Austin* is the city's 30-year comprehensive plan that details future growth of the city through eight priority programs: 1) Healthy Austin; 2) Creative Economy; 3) Compact & Connected; 4) Revise Land Development Code; 5) Water; 6) Environment; 7) Affordability; and 8) Workforce. The plan identifies key challenges of an increasing population and outward expansion. A priority of the comprehensive plan is to strengthen green infrastructure to protect the natural environment and enhance recreational opportunities, while turning more attention to the creation of smaller parks in or within walking distance of neighborhoods. The broad vision of Imagine Austin is supplemented by various small area plans which include recommendations for parks in particular areas.



City of Austin AUSTIN STRATEGIC MOBILITY PLAN (2019)

The *Austin Strategic Mobility Plan* (ASMP), adopted in April 2019, is Austin's first locally focused, comprehensive multimodal transportation plan intended to guide transportation policies, programs, projects, and investments. There are eight mobility goals addressed in the ASMP: commuter delays; travel choice; health & safety; affordability; sustainability; placemaking; economic prosperity; and innovation.

The plan recognizes the urban trail system as an "integral part" of the transportation network that is important to our mobility, calling for an increase in linear miles of Tier I urban trails and overall trail usage. The ASMP also calls for an increase in access by active modes to and around parks and trails as well as an increase in open space preserved through transportation project mitigation.



City of Austin WATERSHED PROTECTION MASTER PLAN (2016)

The *Watershed Protection Master Plan*, last updated in 2016, seeks to reduce the impacts of flooding, erosion and water pollution on our community to protect lives, property, and the environment. The plan assesses watershed problems and prioritizes effective solutions, including projects, programs, and regulations. There is a need for increased interdepartmental coordination with entities like PARD for programs that involve joint efforts, such as sustainable maintenance practices to improve the water quality and riparian health of waterways in city parks.

Downtown Austin Alliance

DOWNTOWN AUSTIN VISION (2018)

The *Downtown Austin Vision*, released in May of 2018, looks to guide the future of downtown Austin towards a “thriving, welcoming, vibrant, and connected” downtown, citing the importance of downtown parks for livability and sustainability. Priorities include creating new parks, places, and connections where possible and maximizing green infrastructure benefits of the public realm. This involves strategies like completing the urban greenbelt, which includes Waller Creek, Shoal Creek, Lady Bird Lake, and the Ann and Roy Butler Hike-and-Bike Trail, as well as burying I-35 from Cesar Chavez Street to 12th Street to allow capping of the tunnel with parkland.

City of Austin

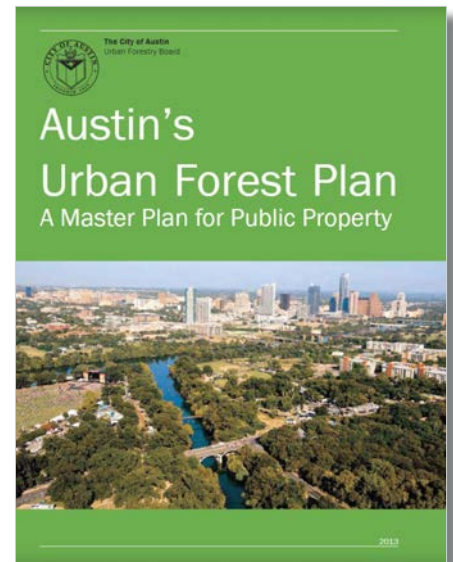
URBAN FOREST PLAN – A MASTER PLAN FOR PUBLIC PROPERTY (2014)

The *Urban Forest Plan*, adopted in 2014, analyzes Austin’s urban forest – trees and other vegetation on public property, including parkland – and emphasizes the role of urban forests to support the health of a community and public spaces, as well as support the city in managing infrastructure needs. The plan is a direct implementation of *Imagine Austin*’s priority item of protecting and expanding Austin’s green infrastructure. Strategies revolve around policy elements such as prioritizing tree planting in parks, coordinating efforts and partnerships across other city departments, nonprofits, the private sector, and governmental jurisdictions, and public education on urban forestry.

City of Austin

AUSTIN STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2023 (2018)

In 2018, City Council adopted *Strategic Direction 2023*, an outcome-based plan guiding the city in the short-term over the next three to five years. The shared vision and six priority Strategic Outcomes strive to create a complete community where every Austinite has choices at every stage of life that allow the community or citizens to experience and contribute to all of the following outcomes: Economic Opportunity and Affordability; Mobility; Safety; Health and Environment; Culture and Lifelong Learning; Government that Works for All. Related to parks and recreation, the plan strategies are focused on equity (accessible, diverse, and inclusive parks and recreation programs and amenities for use by all ages and abilities) and innovative financing models to support, maintain, and expand parks and recreation.





Money Game - Community Meeting Series 1
Source: WRT

THE PLANNING PROCESS

REVISED DRAFT FOR REVIEW

The Long Range Plan was developed with extensive community input over the course of 16 months. PARD staff and partners engaged the community through open houses, surveys, focus groups, and virtual meetings. A statistically-valid survey and an online survey helped to assess community-wide needs and preferences related to parks and recreation.

IN THIS CHAPTER

THE PROCESS

- + How We Developed the Plan
- + Community Engagement Activities

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GOALS, METRICS & OUTCOMES

- + Goals & Metrics
- + Desired Outcomes

HOW WE ENGAGED THE COMMUNITY

- + Advisory Bodies
- + Planning Summits
- + Engaging Hard to Reach Populations
- + Surveys & Online Engagement

THE PROCESS

HOW WE DEVELOPED THE PLAN

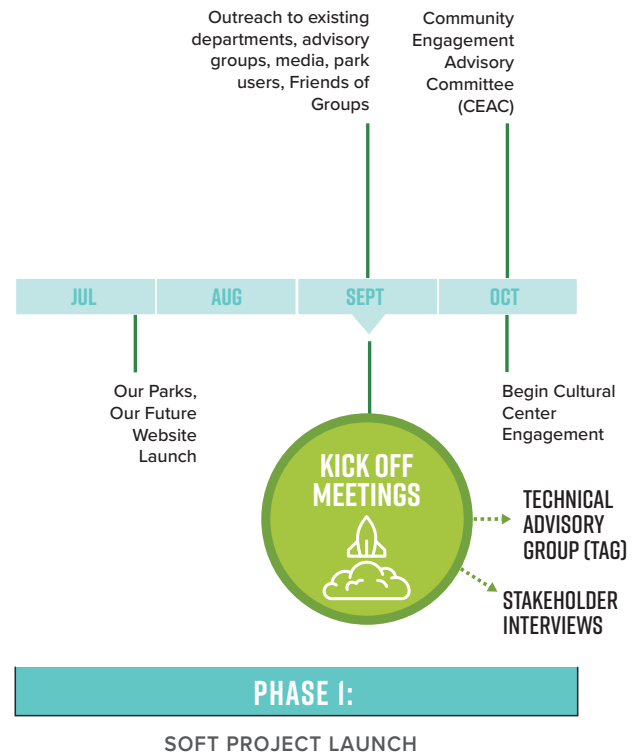
The planning process kicked off in June 2018 and was divided into three main phases of work: *soft project launch, active community engagement and stakeholder engagement, and plan development / priorities.* PARD selected a consultant team, led by WRT, to assist in engaging the community, evaluating existing conditions, and developing the plan. The full engagement and process summaries are included in Appendix B.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

ADVISORY BODIES

The process included meetings with several key Advisory Bodies to help inform and guide the process throughout: Core Group

PROJECT TIMELINE



(PARD), Technical Advisory Group (TAG), and the Community Engagement Advisory Committee (CEAC), described in the following section.

OPEN HOUSES

All community meetings used an open house format rather than a traditional presentation and Q&A format in order to maximize interaction and opportunities for feedback. Planning Summits 1 and 2 each included five community meetings to ensure geographic and scheduling diversity. Planning Summit 3 included two community meetings/draft

plan conversations to review the plan recommendations and actions. A total of 12 community meetings were held throughout the process.

EVENTS

These quick engagement stations leveraged existing events or highly trafficked locations (e.g., parks, libraries, grocery stores) to supplement the community meeting series by meeting people where they already were. The s were modeled after the community meetings.

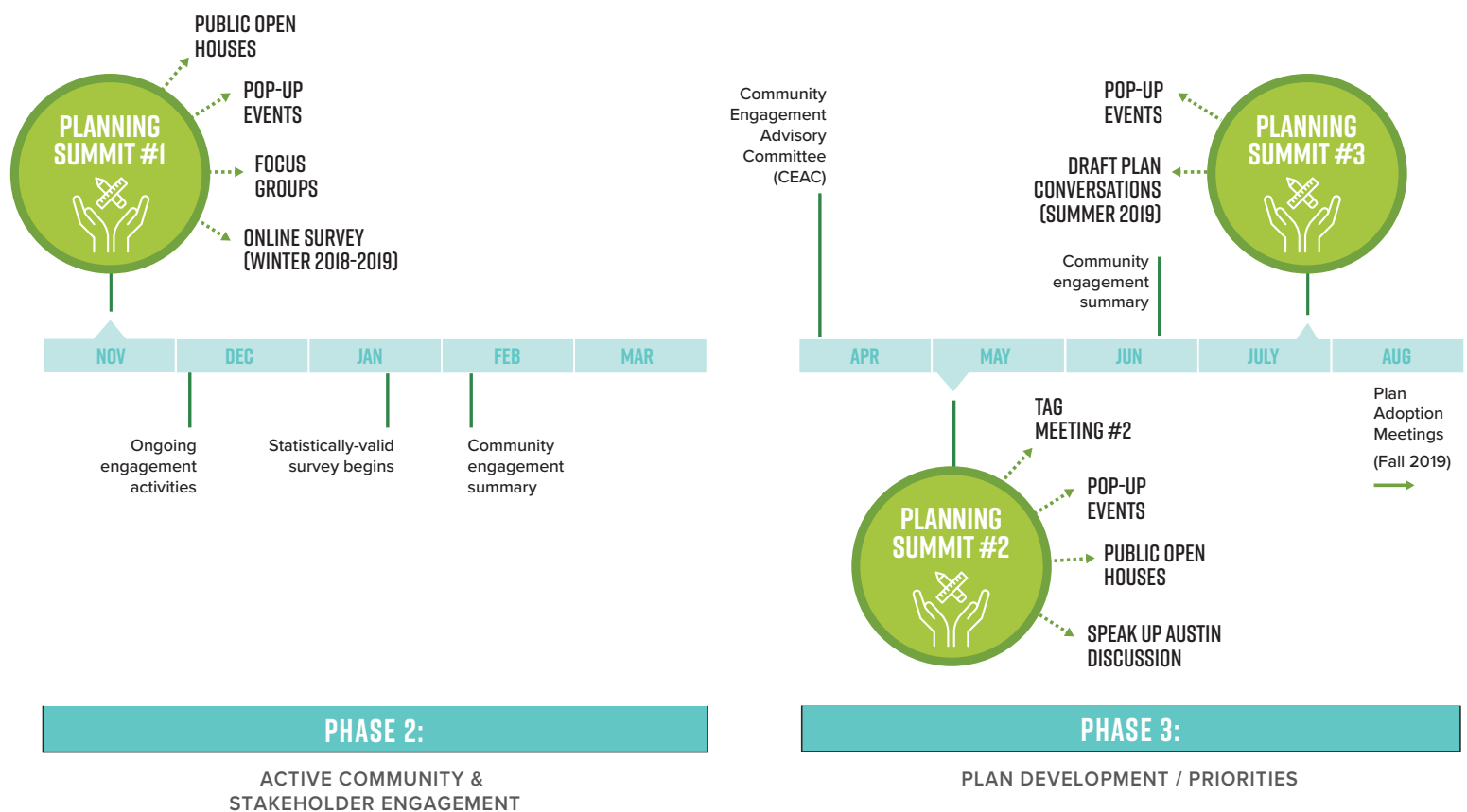


FIGURE 1. ENGAGEMENT PHASES TIMELINE

SURVEYS

To ensure broad participation beyond those that can attend in-person meetings, several types of surveys were included: a citywide online community survey; a randomly-selected, mixed media statistically-valid survey; and an audio survey of cultural facility users. Information and results from all surveys were shared with the community at large and used to inform the reporting of the Austin community needs and priorities for use in the plan development.



event at MT Supermarket
Source: PARD

VIRTUAL MEETINGS

Understanding that many residents are unable to attend a community meeting, PARD developed a series of virtual meetings that lined up with each round of open houses. Using the City of Austin's *Speak up Austin* tool, city staff created an online meeting mirroring the format of the open houses that allowed residents to provide feedback at their convenience.

FOCUS GROUPS

As part of the outreach, six focus groups were held to engage groups of people in guided discussions about topics that might otherwise be under-represented in community input. The specific groups engaged were selected based on input from PARD, the CEAC (at its first meeting in September), and through the public engagement plan. Focus groups included: off-leash dog park advocates,

active older adults / seniors who use parks regularly and those who do not, groups working with underrepresented youth, accessibility advocates, and Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired / Texas School for the Deaf.

Once confirmed, each group (ranging from 6-7 people per group) gathered for a 90-minute conversation where participants introduced themselves and worked through a series of questions that looked to identify the key opportunities and barriers related to the central topic of that focus group.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

In addition, the project team conducted stakeholder group interviews as part of each round of engagement. Groups included both city and non-city staff and were organized around topic areas, e.g., maintenance and operations, community partnerships, recreation, programs, mobility and trails, and community health and wellness.



Planning Summit 1
Source: WRT

SPOTLIGHT: VIRTUAL MEETINGS!

IT IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT FOR ALL PLANNING PROCESSES TO SUPPLEMENT IN-PERSON PUBLIC MEETINGS WITH EQUALLY ROBUST ONLINE RESOURCES. ONLINE VIRTUAL MEETINGS ALLOW RESIDENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PLANNING PROCESS AT THE TIME AND PLACE MOST CONVENIENT TO THEM.

USING THE CITY OF AUSTIN'S SPEAK UP AUSTIN PUBLIC FEEDBACK PLATFORM, PARD WAS ABLE TO HOST ONLINE "VIRTUAL MEETINGS" IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING EACH PLANNING SUMMIT. THESE VIRTUAL MEETINGS PRESENTED MEETING CONTENT THROUGH VISUALS AND VIDEO RECORDINGS AND INCLUDED ASSOCIATED QUESTIONS TO SOLICIT COMMUNITY FEEDBACK RELEVANT TO EACH INPUT STATION. EACH QUESTION HAD ITS OWN DISCUSSION BOARD WHERE PARTICIPANTS COULD VIEW OTHER INPUT AND ADD THEIR OWN.

SPEAKUP *Austin!*

The screenshot shows the SPEAKUP Austin! website interface. The main header includes navigation links: 'All Engagements', 'Share Your Ideas!', 'Home', and 'Sign In / Register'. The main content area features a green banner for 'OUR PARKS OUR FUTURE' with the subtitle 'AUSTIN PARKS & RECREATION LONG RANGE PLAN'. Below the banner is a text block explaining the planning effort and a link to sign up for email updates. A video player for 'Station 1' is embedded, showing a woman speaking. To the right, a sidebar lists the 'Future LRP Launch' and 'Phase 2: What do Austin Parks mean to you?'. A 'Key Dates' section at the bottom right indicates the 'Our Parks, Our Future' Long Range Plan Final Meeting #2 on July 23, 2019.

SIX PARD PLANNING SUB-AREA FEEDBACK BOARDS



Speak Up Austin pages for *Our Parks, Our Future* with virtual meeting content for Planning Summit 2, including videos and associated graphics for each community input station.

HOW WE ENGAGED THE COMMUNITY

AT A GLANCE:

- ONLINE SURVEY RESPONSES: 4,400+
- ONLINE COMMENTS RECEIVED: 9,000+
- OPEN HOUSE & PARTICIPANTS: 622+
- LOCAL EVENTS ATTENDED: 21

As the city's blueprint for new and improved parkland and recreation in Austin for the next ten years, it was critical that PARD staff hear from as many people as possible while the plan was being developed. In addition, the planning horizon of 2028 presented an exciting opportunity for storytelling and celebrating Austin's park system as it coincides with the 100-year anniversary of the City of Austin's Parks and Recreation Department, which was created in February 1928.



Planning Summit 1 – How we can improve
Source: WRT



Planning Summit 1 – Gus Garcia
Source: WRT



Preference voting at Planning Summit 1
Source: WRT



Kid's Activity at Planning Summit 1
Source: WRT



Design your park activity
Source: WRT



Posing with their favorite park!
Source: WRT



Design your park activity
Source: WRT

ENGAGING KIDS THROUGH ART!

PLANNING SUMMIT
1 MEETINGS
INCLUDED A FUN,
MULTIGENERATIONAL
ACTIVITY WHERE
PARTICIPANTS WERE
ASKED TO CREATE
A MODEL OF “THEIR
FAVORITE PARK” (OR
IF THEY ARE
YOUNGER IN AGE,
“THEIR FAVORITE
PARK MEMORY”) OUT
OF FOUND-OBJECT
MATERIALS. THE
ACTIVITY PROVIDED
A CHANCE FOR
PEOPLE TO ENGAGE
IN A NON-LINEAR,
VISUAL MANNER,
AND ALLOW TIME
FOR A DIRECT
CONVERSATION
ABOUT WHAT
PEOPLE VALUE
ABOUT PARK SPACES
AND ACTIVITIES IN
THEIR OWN LIVES.

ADVISORY BODIES

CORE TEAM

The LRP Core Team consisted of PARD leadership and staff from across the department who were closely involved in the planning process and implementation of the LRP. The Core Team met monthly to review materials and provide guidance and direction to the consultant team.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CEAC)

The role of the Community Engagement Advisory Committee (CEAC) was to help guide the outreach, serve as ambassadors of the *Our Parks, Our Future* planning process, identify strategies to engage hard to reach groups, and assist PARD in sharing information about the process and plan with the community. The CEAC met for the first time in October 2018 and assisted PARD with identifying outreach strategies, added to the stakeholder database, and supported the overall social media engagement. The CEAC also met prior to Planning Summits 2 and 3 to review and provide feedback on meeting content, logistics, and engagement strategies.



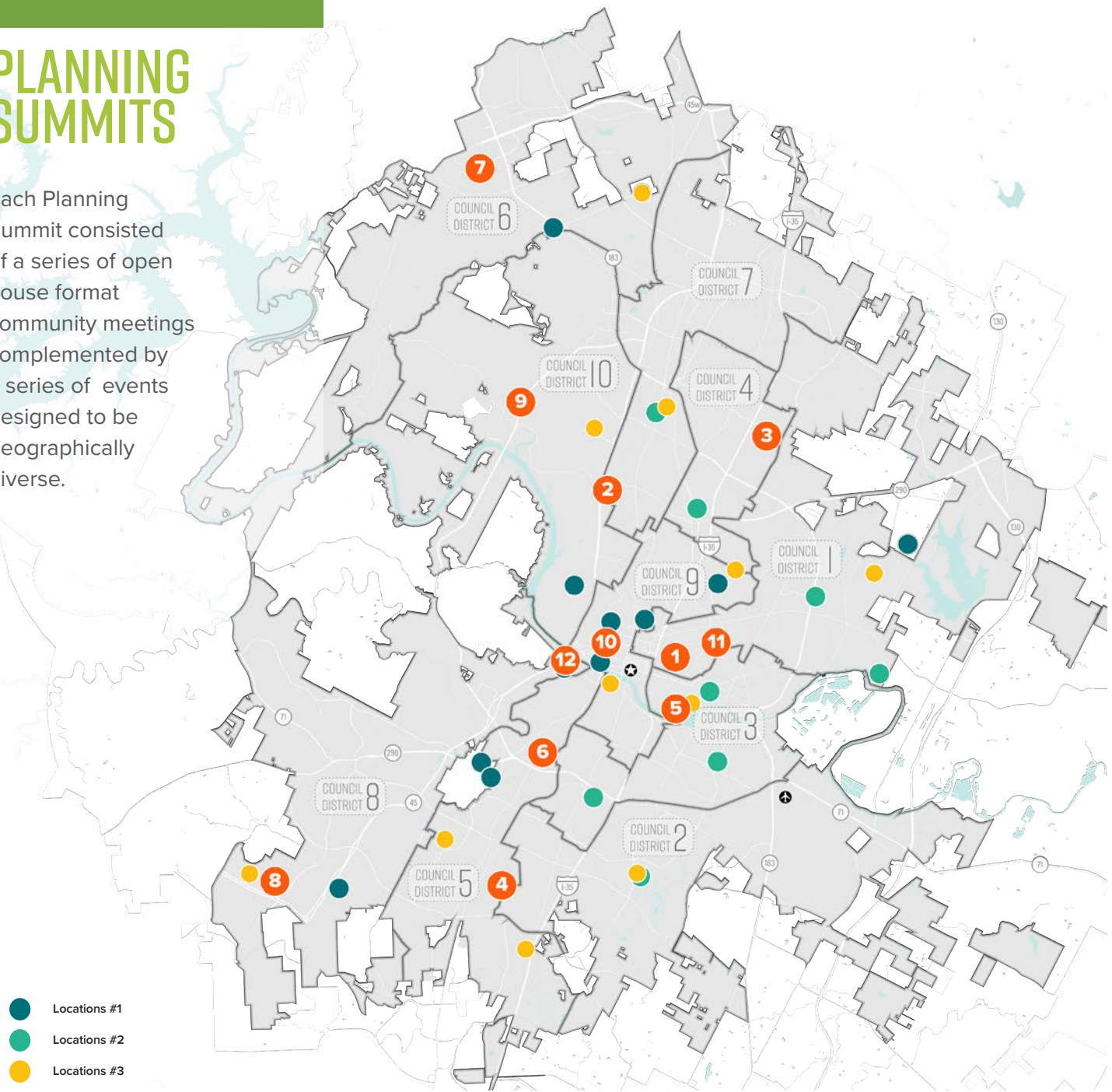
Technical Advisory Group (TAG) Kick-Off Discussions.
Source: WRT

TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP (TAG)

The Technical Advisory Group (TAG) was composed of a diverse group of representatives of various city departments including PARD divisions, Transportation, Public Works, Public Health, Watershed Protection, Economic Development, Real Estate Services, Planning and Zoning, Office of Sustainability, Office of Equity, among others. The TAG met for the first time as part of the project kickoff in September 2018 and met again as part of Planning Summit 2 and 3.

PLANNING SUMMITS

Each Planning Summit consisted of a series of open house format community meetings complemented by a series of events designed to be geographically diverse.



- Locations #1
- Locations #2
- Locations #3

OPEN HOUSE SERIES #1

- 1** George Washington Carver Museum
1165 Angelina Street
November 8, 2018, 6pm - 8pm
- 2** Northwest Recreation Center
2913 Northland Drive
November 10, 2018, 11am - 1pm
- 3** Gustavo "Gus" L. Garcia Recreation Center
1201 E Rundberg Lane
November 10, 2018, 3pm - 5pm
- 4** Dittmar Recreation Center
1009 W Dittmar Road
November 13, 2018, 6pm - 9pm
- 5** Fiesta Gardens Building
2101 Jesse E Segovia Street
November 14, 2018, 6pm - 8pm

OPEN HOUSE SERIES #2

- 6** South Austin Senior Activity Center
3911 Manchaca Road
May 2, 2019, 6pm - 8pm
- 7** Anderson Mill Limited District Community Center
11500 El Salido Parkway
May 3, 2019, 6:30pm - 8:30pm
- 8** Circle C Community Center
7817 La Crosse Avenue
May 4, 2019, 10am - 12pm
- 9** IBPS Buddhist Temple/FGS Xiang Yun Temple
6720 N Capital of Texas Highway
May 4, 2019, 2pm - 4pm
- 10** Austin Recreation Center
1301 Shoal Creek Boulevard
May 4, 2019, 6pm - 8pm

OPEN HOUSE SERIES #3

- 11** Millennium Youth Entertainment Complex
1156 Hargrave Street
July 25, 2019, 4pm - 8pm
- 12** Zilker Botanical Garden
2220 Barton Springs Road
July 27, 2019, 9am - 1pm

FIGURE 2. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY LOCATIONS

Source: WRT.

PLANNING SUMMIT #1

November 2018

AT A GLANCE:

- SURVEYS COMPLETED: 140+
- OPEN HOUSE PARTICIPANTS: 189
- LOCAL EVENTS ATTENDED: 12



Planning Summit 1 at the George Washington Carver Museum and Cultural Center
Source: PARD

This series of five open houses focused on the question “What do our parks mean to you?” and consisted of stations supported by staff and the consultant team describing the existing parks and recreation resources in the city, the planning process and the LRP’s importance. These meetings solicited feedback on:

- + Current strengths, deficiencies, opportunities, and challenges
- + Facility and program priorities
- + Budget priorities and trade-offs (e.g., “money game”)
- + Park and recreation future vision

The associated s took place in December 2018 and January 2019 and were designed to not

only share information about the PARD Long Range Plan, but also to promote and extend the impact of the Community Meeting Series #1 by engaging residents and stakeholders outside of the meeting setting and encouraging more continuous, ongoing participation in the planning effort between meetings.

At the s, community members were greeted and provided with a handout as well as PARD giveaways and additional Long Range Plan materials. Paper surveys and a tablet/computer were available to collect input for those interested. Participants either completed the survey on-site or were asked to complete

the survey at a more convenient time. The money game board from the first meeting series also proved a fun and concise way to gather input at these s.

WHAT WE HEARD

Summary of top responses (for all participants, not individual meeting locations):

Favorite Parks:

- + Zilker Metropolitan Park
- + Metz Neighborhood Park
- + Roy Guerrero Colorado River Park
- + Barton Creek Greenbelt
- + Circle C Ranch at Slaughter Creek Metropolitan Park

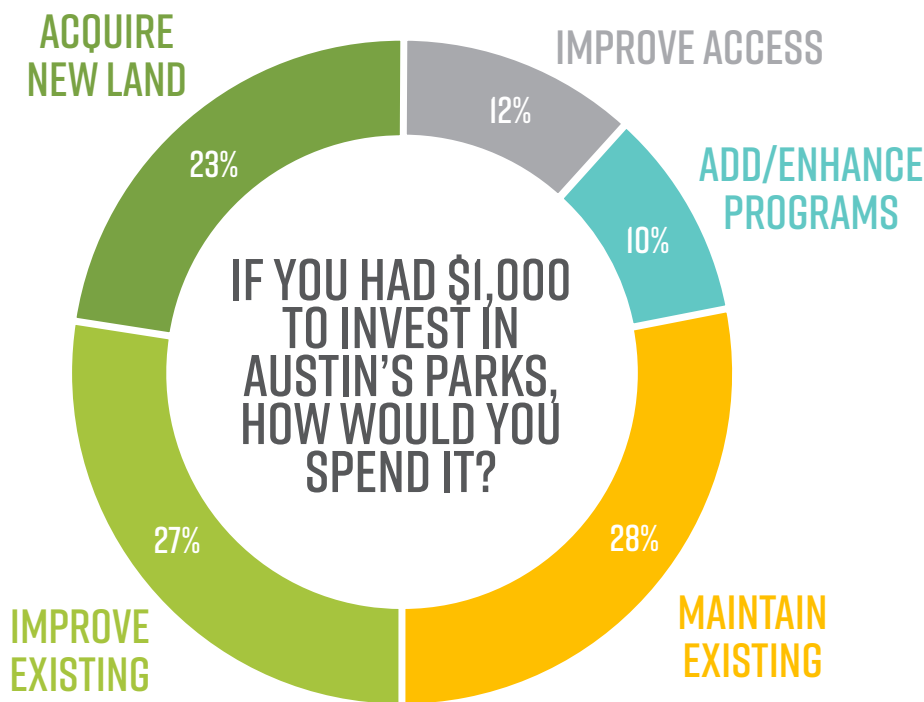


FIGURE 3. SUMMIT #1 MONEY GAME RESULTS
Source: WRT.

- + Gustavo “Gus” L. Garcia District Park

What You Love About Austin Parks/What Austin Parks Do Well:

- + Trails, variety in trails
- + Nature
- + Maintenance of facilities, parks and vegetation - always clean
- + Sports programming (basketball, volleyball, swimming, disc golf)
- + Spread throughout the city
- + Disc golf and multi-use courts
- + Programs/activities offered, accessible events

Facility Types That Are Most Important to You:

- + Nature Trails
- + Pools & Water Features
- + Natural Areas/Preserves
- + Community Gardens
- + Cultural/Historic Art Center

Programs That Are Most Important to You:

- + Outdoor Recreation
- + Aquatics
- + Stewardship Services (Adopt-a-Park/Trail)
- + Arts & Culture
- + Health & Fitness
- + Senior Programs & Services

How Austin Parks Can Improve: OVERALL

- + Better, more consistent year-round maintenance & repair programs for buildings, vegetation and infrastructure
- + Disc golf improvements (more courses, add safer crossings)
- + Expanding programming (more water stations/pads, dog parks, utilities for large events, educational classes)
- + Promotion/outreach/education

FACILITIES

- + Trail/path improvements & purpose/mode separations (ADA accessibility/paths, better access into parks)
- + Disc golf (more and improved courses, disc golf tournament)
- + Trail improvements (add separate bike/hike trails, repair throughout city, better signage)
- + Maintenance (on invasive species, repair infrastructure, bathrooms)
- + More neighborhood parks

PROGRAMS

- + Athletic/sports facilities (multi-use/bike polo courts, tennis courts)
- + Programming for special populations (youth sports programs, fitness classes/section for women)
- + Streamline the process for arranging events in Austin parks

PLANNING SUMMIT #2

May 2019

AT A GLANCE:

- OPEN HOUSE PARTICIPANTS: 136
- S HOSTED: 9
- VISITORS ENGAGED: 157

This series of five open houses included results of the first round of community engagement, in addition to groupings of stations or themes discussing: current stats about the park system and benchmarking comparisons; growth and development trends; the distribution of facilities and amenities within the city's park system; and a look at how trends and conditions varied geographically.

The associated s took place in May and June of 2019. At the s, several Community Meeting #2 boards were available for information and input gathering including a summary of community survey results,

the community engagement theme dot-voting board, and the combined planning area input board for the area in which the was taking place.

WHAT WE HEARD

THEMES FEEDBACK

Ten consistent recurring themes that emerged from previous community engagement events and completed surveys were shared with participants. Those ten themes were: natural experiences, unstructured spaces, green infrastructure, linear parks & trails, proximity & access, urban spaces, parks & arts/culture, educational opportunities, inclusivity, and cleanliness, safety and homelessness. Participants provided feedback and voted on these ten emerging themes. In general, there was consensus across all combined planning areas on what people wanted to see in the future. The top five long-range themes that participants agreed on were:

1. Cleanliness & Safety

People were concerned that parks are not being adequately maintained. This includes issues around lighting, shade, maintenance, recycling, bathrooms, off-leash dog areas, and dog waste disposal. People also expressed concern about the issue of homelessness and saw an opportunity to work with the

homeless population to improve park cleanliness and safety.

2. Linear Parks & Trails

People were more interested in parks that allow them to move (walk/run/bike) as opposed to staying in one place. There was an interest in nature and multi-purpose trails within PARD parks as well as connectivity between parks along urban trails.

3. Inclusivity

People expressed a desire for parks and programming to be more inclusive. This includes more publicity about activities, providing free parking, reducing fees that may prevent low-income residents from participating, and increasing multi-generational programs and spaces.

4. Natural Experiences

People expressed a desire for parks that feel more natural. This includes undeveloped, wild natural spaces, rustic finishes instead of paved areas, and more native plants.

5. Unstructured Spaces

In general, people cared less about spaces for specific programming, opting for more multi-use spaces. This includes preserving green "natural" and "open" spaces.

PRIORITIES

Participants were asked what was most important to them, and responses varied from more recycling to increased parking to additional resources for disc golf. There was a general interest in increasing summer camp opportunities and striking a balance between active recreation/programming and preserving parks as natural areas. However, participants raised concerns about equity and affordable housing as parkland and amenities increase. Some comments include:

- + “More budgeting towards cleaning up trash on greenbelts”
- + “Park programming for kids and adults with disabilities”
- + “A functional multi-purpose court (fenced in, nice surface) for multiple sports to practice, hold tournaments, and engage in weekly pick-up games”
- + “Natural play and learning environments are important for early childhood development. Seeing money go towards installation of natural play sites is good for all of us”

IDENTIFYING LOCAL NEEDS

Participants were also shown the six geographic combined planning areas that divide Austin for the purposes of the LRP: North, East, Southeast, Southwest, West, and Central. These combined planning areas

are intended to approximate the way residents and visitors might make use of the local park system – what facilities and amenities are accessible to them and how they relate to one another. There were opportunities to give feedback on four different topics within each combined planning area:

1. Improving Connections/ Access. Where can access and connections to existing parks be improved?

2. Investing in Existing Parks. Where should investments in improvements/maintenance to existing parks be made?

3. Creating New Parks. Where would you like to see new parks located?

4. Facility Type High Priority Needs. Where should new facilities be located in each area? This question was specific to each combined planning area and reflective of previous feedback. Priority needs were identified through the statistically-valid survey.

PLANNING SUMMIT #3

July 2019

AT A GLANCE:

- OPEN HOUSE PARTICIPANTS: 60+
- S HOSTED: 11
- VISITORS ENGAGED: 248

This final series was set up as two open houses, each with a brief presentation providing an overview of the planning process and recommendations to orient participants. Participants were encouraged to review boards describing citywide strategies and planning area recommendations, and ask questions and provide feedback on the recommendations.

The draft plan was made available online for public review, comment, and feedback. During this review period, a final series of s was hosted at locations across the city to get direct feedback from the community.

ENGAGING HARD TO REACH POPULATIONS

FOCUS GROUPS & INTERVIEWS

As part of the insight gathering process, the Consultant Team conducted a series of six focus groups and interviews in March and May of 2019 to gain a deeper understanding of key issues that PARD knows will be of community-wide interest in the future. The subjects for these focus groups and interviews included: Parks Usage for Seniors, Off-Leash Dog Areas, Underrepresented Youth Engagement, Accessibility and Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired / Texas School for the Deaf. While the focus group interests and backgrounds were very diverse, there were common themes that emerged across the discussions:

- + Accessibility and lack of clear signage is an issue that came up frequently in discussion. There was an interest and need for universal design in parks, from functional needs of play to accessibility of trails and restrooms, especially from public transit. There was also interest in collaborating with the tech sector to improve accessibility (e.g. audio systems for the blind). There was support for more sensory playscapes and pocket parks.

- + Inclusivity and creating a welcoming atmosphere for all was noted as an area for improvement. Visitors often wonder, “is this place for me?” Some ideas for improvement include bilingual signage, wayfinding, universal design, increased access through multiple entrances, and integration with efforts to establish safer routes to schools.
- + Active adults and seniors who use parks noted a need for improved park transit service, more restrooms, shaded areas, and multi-generational spaces – amenities that would benefit all, not just active adults and seniors.
- + Off-leash dog area advocates noted that it is not safe to get to parks by walking due to a lack of sidewalks or gaps in the network – an improvement that would benefit all, not just dog walkers.

The focus group discussions also yielded more user-specific feedback and ideas:

Off-Leash Dog Area Advocates

- + Appreciation of growth in understanding of off-leash dog parks in last decade.
- + Need to continue to upgrade and maintain facilities over time (e.g., safety of dogs and owners through: double entry gates, water features, cooling zones).
- + Group interest in a dog sports center (amenity that could require user fees).

- + Support for and focus on important role of signage / communication around dog safety (e.g., body language, when is it safe to approach a dog).
- + Consider offering classes at the dog parks themselves (or other locations) to help with the many needed dimensions of community education – from “How to be a Good Dog Owner” to “How to be with Dogs in Public” – similar to how community education offerings are at libraries and recreation centers.

Underrepresented Youth Engagement at Montopolis Recreation Center

- + Need to improve facilities to address core concern of accessibility in every dimension, whether mobility infrastructure or cultural accessibility; this may include “in between” spaces, safe spaces, nursing rooms, and physically accessible spaces.
- + Focus on specific routes taken by youth to address park accessibility/connectivity and explore combining with Safe Routes to School efforts.
- + Desire for better communication and administrative processes to increase sense of accessibility, such as bilingual signage, hiring staff from adjacent neighborhoods, more communication about what is available in all parks, improved process for groups trying to reserve PARD

spaces.

Active and Non-Active Seniors

- + Potential to add multi-generational spaces to increase interaction between different age groups and foster connections.
- + Consider adding more enhanced facilities, such as more shaded rest spots, more restrooms, and segregated speeds on active trails.
- + Non-active seniors have similar needs to that of active seniors, but to a greater extent. While enhanced facilities may not be a necessity for active seniors, those same enhanced facilities (shaded rest spots, restrooms, etc.) determine whether parks are accessible for non-active seniors.

Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired and Texas School for the Deaf

- + Primary need for both groups is to hire an accessibility-design specialist to create a series of design guidelines.
- + Specific recommendations for the blind and deaf communities include more accessible wayfinding, amenities, and general urban design (e.g. tactile map, auditory locators like windchimes, visual aids, captioning at park events, sensory playscapes, and designated spots for MetroAccess).

CULTURAL FACILITY AUDIO SURVEY

TO BRING A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF THE ROLE CULTURAL FACILITIES PLAY IN THE LIVES OF THEIR USERS THE TEAM CONDUCTED INTERVIEWS AT EACH CULTURAL CENTER IN AUSTIN. THE AUDIO RECORDINGS WERE THEN MIXED AND SHARED WITH THE COMMUNITY AS PART OF THE SECOND ROUND OF MEETINGS. “PARD RADIO” PROVIDED AN OPPORTUNITY FOR PARTICIPANTS TO LISTEN AND SHARE THEIR STORIES.



PARD Radio at Community Meetings
Source: WRT

SURVEYS & ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

This plan used two different types of surveys to achieve different but related goals. The first, the Online Community Survey, was designed as an explorative tool for more open-ended feedback that could shape the themes and focus of the plan, while the second, the Statistically-Valid Survey, was designed as a more precise tool to prioritize investment and ensure results were representative of resident needs and desires at multiple geographic scales.

HOW WE GOT THE WORD OUT

- WEB**
Social media, e-blasts, texts
- PRINT**
Flyers, lawn signs
- MEDIA**
Cap metro & media/radio ads

ONLINE COMMUNITY SURVEY

November 27, 2018 - January 27, 2019

Responses: 4,400+
Comments: 9,000

The online LRP survey opened following the first round of community meetings and provided an additional forum for participation. PARD advertised the survey through events, flyers, email blasts and social media, signage, and ads on Capital Metro buses and media/radio. It was available in Arabic, Korean, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Spanish, and Vietnamese in addition to English. The survey allowed for open ended comments and was designed to help the consultant team understand the current interests and needs of the community related to parks and recreational facilities. It included questions related to frequency of park use, how a person gets to or would like to get to their parks, and the types of programs and amenities they would like to see in future parks.



WHO TOOK THE SURVEY?



FAMILY SIZE

42% live in a 2-person household



AGE

46% are 35-54 years old



RACE/ETHNICITY

67% White
13% Hispanic
4% Black
4% Asian
3% Other
9% No Answer

TIME AS AUSTINITES

29% have lived in Austin for 30+ years
28% have lived in Austin for less than 10 years

49%
VISIT PARKS
WEEKLY

21%
VISIT PARKS
MONTHLY

16%
VISIT PARKS
DAILY

WHAT DO YOU VALUE?

- #1 (NATURAL) BEAUTY
- #2 PLACES TO CONNECT TO NATURE
- #3 CLEANLINESS
- #4 Easy to get to
- #5 Safety
- #6 Places to exercise or be active
- #7 Quiet places and places to relax

WHAT KEEPS YOU FROM USING PARKS?

- #1 CRIME OR SAFETY CONCERNS
- #2 NO PARKS OR FACILITIES CLOSE TO HOME
- #3 PARKS APPEAR DEGRADED, IN POOR CONDITION
- #4 Inadequate parking
- #5 Presence of people experiencing homelessness
- #6 Lack of lighting
- #7 Parks & facilities do not appear clean
- #8 Lack of awareness of what programs are offered
- #9 Operating hours / length of season too short

WHAT PROGRAMS WOULD KEEP YOU AT A PARK MORE?

38% ARTS & CULTURE

12% FITNESS & SPORTS

24% GROUP GATHERINGS

12% NATURE PROGRAMS

WHAT PARKS DO YOU VISIT OUTSIDE OF AUSTIN?

28% VISIT TRAVIS COUNTY PARKS

17% VISIT LCRA PARKS

DESIRES FOR THE NEXT 10 YEARS...

AMENITIES

- Nature trails for hiking and walking
- Natural areas & preserves
- Multi-purpose trails (walking, running, hiking, mountain biking)

FACILITIES

- Nature centers
- Multi-generational community recreation centers
- Community centers for recreation, art & culture

PROGRAMS

- Aquatic
- Gardening
- Group exercise

YOUTH PROGRAMS

- Summer camps (nature-based)
- Youth environmental education
- Summer camps (adventure)

MOST FREQUENTLY VISITED PARKS

NEIGHBORHOOD/SCHOOL/POCKET PARK 1,906 Respondents

A.B. DITTMAR PARK



6%

BRENTWOOD PARK



5%

BARTON HILLS PARK



5%

DISTRICT/METROPOLITAN PARK 2,098 Respondents

ZILKER PARK



21%

WALNUT CREEK PARK



10%



10%

GREENBELT 1,762 Respondents

BARTON CREEK



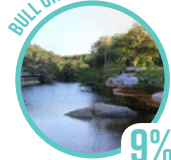
45%

SHOAL CREEK



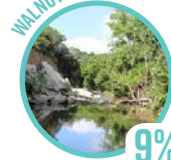
10%

BULL CREEK



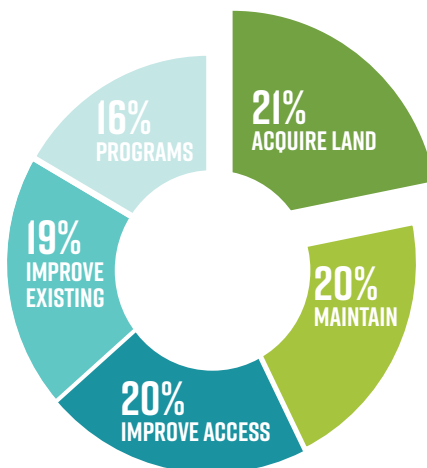
9%

WALNUT CREEK



9%

INVESTMENT PRIORITIES



STATISTICALLY-VALID SURVEY

January 2019 - March 2019

Responses: 925

This survey was administered by ETC Institute via telephone, mail, and internet and was translated as needed in order to capture with a degree of certainty the needs and priorities of all residents in the city—not just those who choose to participate in other forms of engagement. This survey was designed to validate and complement other engagement through the use of more in-depth questions. The statistically-valid survey continued until it had achieved a 95% confidence interval for all results at the citywide and combined planning area level. A total of 925 residents completed the survey. The overall results for the sample of 925 households have a precision of at least +/- 3.22 at the 95% level of confidence.

Method

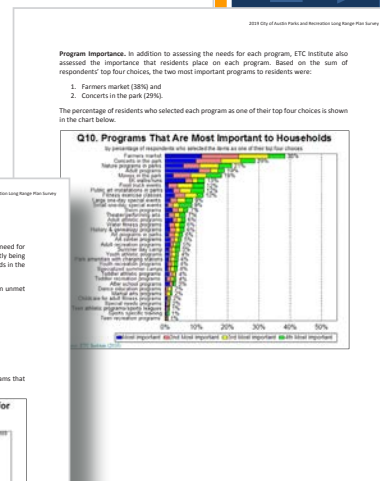
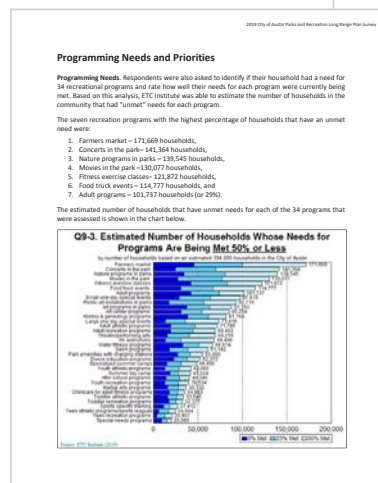
ETC Institute mailed a survey packet to a random sample of households in the City of Austin. Residents who received the survey were given the option of returning the survey by mail or completing it online. Ten days after the surveys were mailed, ETC Institute sent emails and placed phone calls to the households that received the survey to encourage

participation. The emails contained a link to the online version of the survey to make it easier for residents to complete. To prevent people who were not residents of the City of Austin from participating, everyone who completed the survey online was required to enter their home address. If the address from a survey completed online did not match one of the addresses selected for the sample, the online survey was not counted.

Results

Facility/Amenity Use, Ratings and Priorities

- + 90% of households visited a PARD park or facility during the past year.
- + 83% of households who visited a park or facility



indicated that the condition of the parks/facilities they visited was either “excellent” or “good.”

The two most important amenities to residents were multi-purpose and nature trails (57%) and open spaces/nature parks/preserves (42%). The four recreation amenities with the highest percentage of households that have an unmet need were:

- + Open spaces/nature parks preserve
- + Multi-purpose and nature trails
- + Community gardens
- + Off-leash dog areas/parks

Program Use, Ratings and Priorities

- + 17% of households participated in a program offered by PARD during the past year.
- + 90% of respondents who participated rated the programs their household participated in as either “excellent” or “good.”

The two most important programs to residents were farmers’ markets (38%) and concerts in the park (29%). The seven desired recreation programs with the highest percentage of households that have an unmet need were:

- + Farmers’ market
- + Concerts in the park
- + Nature programs in parks
- + Movies in the park
- + Fitness exercise classes
- + Food truck events
- + Adult programs

Information Sources

Seventy-three percent (73%) of respondents indicated that word of mouth is the way they learn about City of Austin programs, activities, and events. Only 29% of respondents indicated they used the City of Austin website and another 29% indicated they use newspapers. However, respondents indicated that email (28%) or the PARD website (18%) are the most preferred information sources for programs, activities, and events.

Barriers to Usage and Participation

The biggest barriers to usage and participation were:

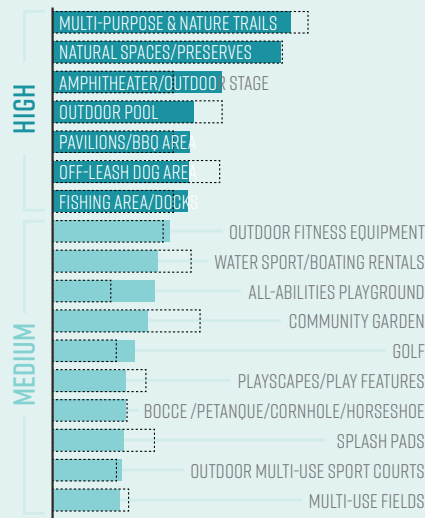
- + a lack of awareness of what programs are offered (69%)
- + inadequate parking at parks and facilities (61%)
- + the presence of people experiencing homelessness (54%)

ESTABLISHING PRIORITY NEEDS

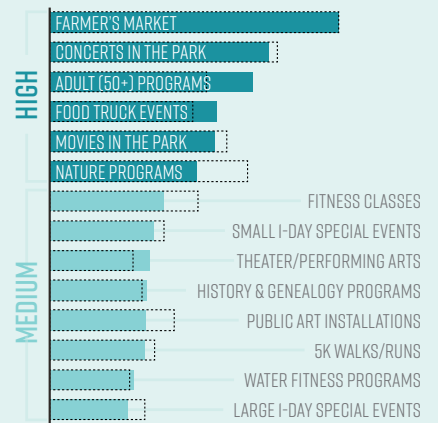
The Priority Investment Rating (PIR) System was developed by ETC Institute as an objective tool to evaluate the priority that should be placed on investments. The PIR equally weights the importance residents place on something and how many residents have unmet needs for that thing.

For example, using the PIR system for the statistically-valid survey of residents of the Southeast Combined Planning Area, the following priorities emerged in this ranked order (compared against the citywide prioritization of the same elements, depicted in the black dashed outline).

FACILITY & AMENITY PRIORITIES



PROGRAM PRIORITIES



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT THEMES

Ten themes emerged from the numerous community engagement events and surveys completed as part of this planning process. Those themes along with the priority needs and citywide analysis form the basis of the system-wide recommendations to follow.

NATURAL EXPERIENCES

People expressed a desire for parks that feel more natural. This includes undeveloped, wild natural spaces, rustic finishes instead of paved areas and more native plants.

UNSTRUCTURED SPACES

In general, people cared less about spaces for specific programming, opting for more multi-use spaces and preserving green, natural, and open spaces.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

There was an interest in proactively using green infrastructure in parks to build a more resilient city. This includes stormwater management, flood protection, heat island effect mitigation, drought tolerance, and native planting/habitat areas.

“Please don't develop our natural areas! We need natural forested areas to relieve ourselves from the stress of the city.”

“I like the idea of parks integrated into every day life. Smaller parks throughout the city and better connectivity between parks could achieve this.”

Sometimes I notice homeless people sleeping on a bench, but in general I am happy that everybody has access to the park area and have not felt threatened by the homeless presence.

LINEAR PARKS & TRAILS

People were more interested in parks that allow them to move (walk/run/bike) as opposed to staying in one place. There was an interest in nature and multi-purpose trails within PARD parks as well as connectivity between parks along urban trails.

PROXIMITY & ACCESS

People were concerned about both the lack of parks near them and/or their ability to get to parks. This includes issues around walkability, adequate parking, and public transit access.

URBAN SPACES

People expressed a concern that existing parkland in high-density urban areas exists already at critical locations, but is underutilized. The desire was for a renewed commitment to well-maintained green spaces and enhanced programming in urban parks in high-density areas.

"I don't have a pocket park close to me. Due to traffic and the lack of sidewalks and bike lanes, I have to drive to a park to arrive safely."

"Educate our youth. It is cost effective and fun. There are many activities youth can do outside and we need them out in nature as much as possible. It is healthy and has been shown to be calming and decreases anxiety."

"Brush Square should be an opportunity to show off what is great about Austin's outdoor culture to those at the convention center, instead of a forgotten lawn!"

Too many programs at high costs and fees. Need more accommodations for low income folks.

"More parks that embrace nature and Austin spirit. Do we really need more buildings in this city?"

"Make more art along trails [Butler Hike and Bike Trail]"

PARKS & ARTS/CULTURE

People expressed a desire for increased arts/culture programming in parks. This includes increased community-focused programming and more cultural centers that could host these kinds of programs.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

People were interested in more hands-on educational opportunities. This includes youth education, arts-based education, and summer camps.

INCLUSIVITY

People expressed a desire for parks and programming to be more inclusive. This includes reducing fees that may prevent low-income residents from accessing PARD parkland and facilities or participating in PARD programs, increasing publicity about activities, and increasing multi-generational programs and spaces.

CLEANLINESS & SAFETY

People were concerned that parks are not being adequately maintained. This includes issues around lighting, shade, maintenance, recycling, bathrooms, off-leash dog areas and dog waste disposal. People also expressed concern about the issue of homelessness and saw an opportunity to work with individuals experiencing homelessness to improve park cleanliness and safety.



Yett Park.
Source: PARD

OUR PARKS

REVISED DRAFT FOR REVIEW

Austin's park system reflects its unique geography, climate, history, and culture. The PARD park system occupies a central place in the identity and lifestyle of Austinites; over time it has become woven into the daily routines of residents. The system's stunning natural features consistently draw visitors from near and far to experience first hand the unique dynamism of these remarkable public places. Taking stock of the existing system involves understanding not only the physical assets, but also how they are managed and used. Before embarking on planning for the future, it is critical to understand how the park system functions currently and how it relates to its communities of users.

IN THIS CHAPTER

EXISTING SYSTEM

- + Overview
- + Open Space Framework
- + Park Planning Areas
- + Park Types
- + Non-PARD Parks & Open Space
- + Facility Distribution Analysis

HOW DO WE COMPARE?

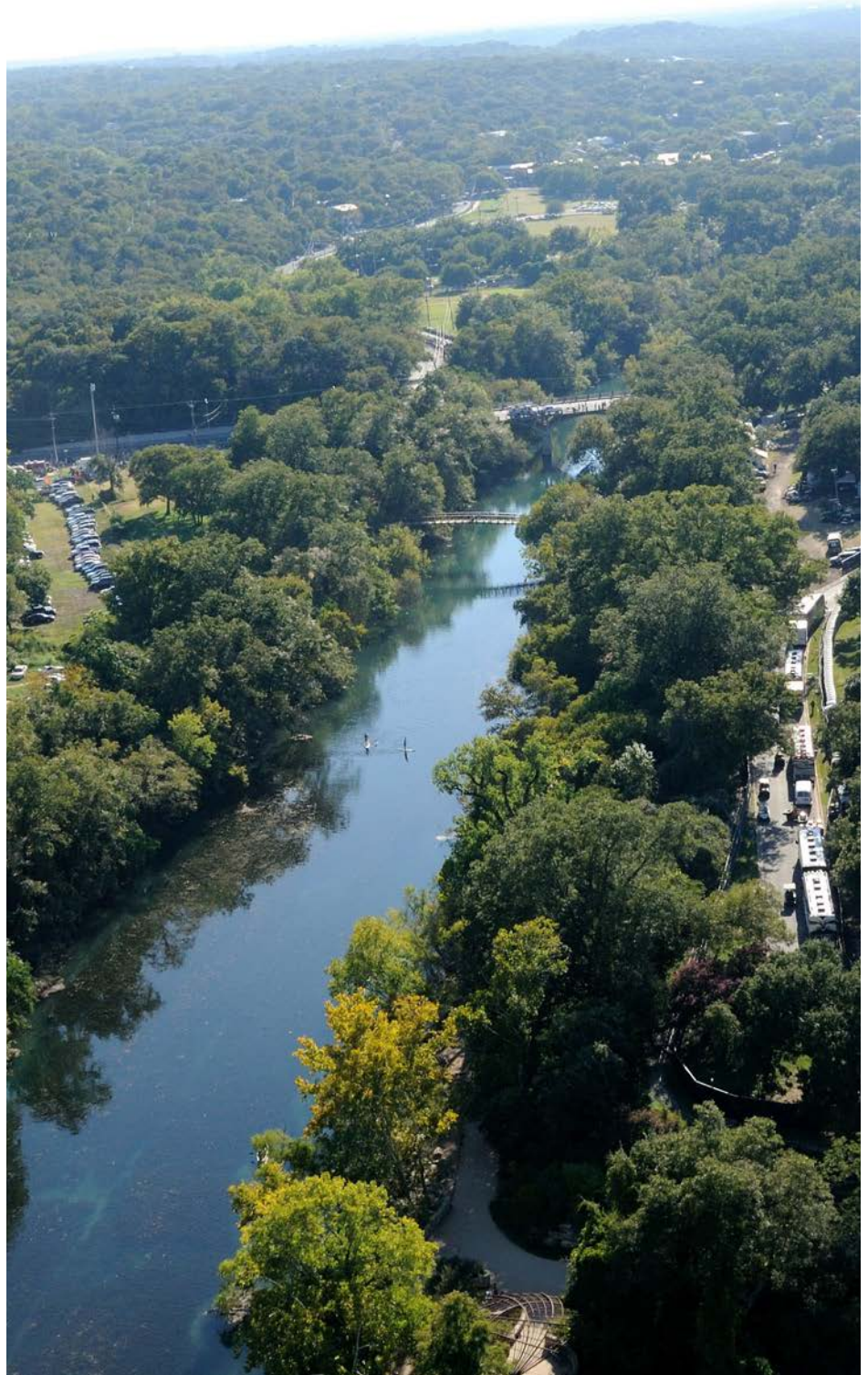
- + Benchmarking

EXISTING SYSTEM

OVERVIEW

Austin's park and recreation system is diverse and far-reaching with 291 parks. PARD owns and maintains more than 20,000 acres of land and water, 17,343 acres of which is dedicated parkland. PARD manages over 227 miles of trails, 40 pools, and numerous mixed-use fields, volleyball courts, playgrounds, golf courses, and off-leash dog areas. PARD is unique from many other city park departments in that the department oversees five historic cemeteries, more than 20 museums, art, performance and cultural venues, and numerous historic buildings.

Together, each individual park and facility form a network of spaces and city amenities, connected by trails, sidewalks, and streets. Nearly 720 full-time staff and 1,500 temporary or part-time staff work together to operate and maintain Austin's park and recreation system.

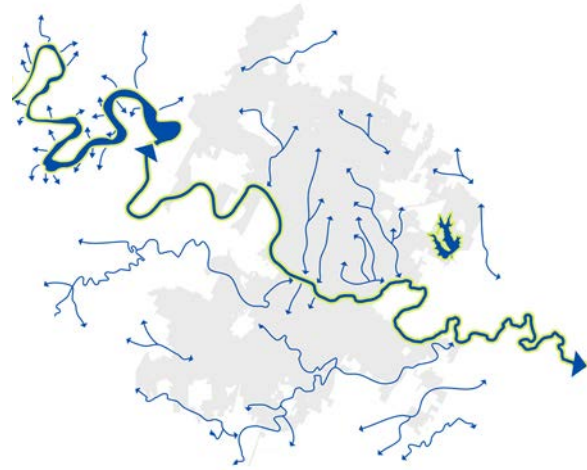


Source: PARD

OPEN SPACE FRAMEWORK

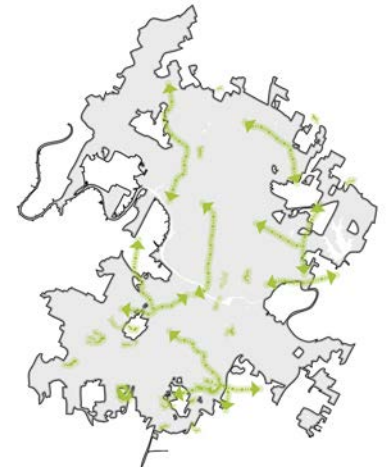
THE RIVER, LAKES AND CREEKS

Spanning more than 800 miles across Texas, the Colorado River is one of Austin's prominent natural features. The river's watershed also encompasses the city. Austin relies on the Colorado River for 100% of its municipal water. The majority of Austin's public spaces and parks are connected to the river, including some of Austin residents' favorite parks like Zilker Metropolitan Park. The river also forms Lake Austin, Lake Travis, and Lady Bird Lake via its dammed portions. Along Lady Bird Lake, the 10-mile Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail offers many vantage points of the city and runs almost consistently on the river's edge. The majority of Austin's public spaces and parks are connected to the river and the creeks that feed into it, including some of Austin residents' favorite parks like Zilker Metropolitan Park



THE GREENBELTS

Greenbelts are linear, natural feature-focused open spaces intended for passive recreational use and preservation of natural resources. Austin boasts various greenbelts that serve multiple functions, including recreation, wildlife habitat, water quality protection, flood risk reduction, and transportation. These greenbelts also have the potential for expansion, linking different public spaces together. The Barton Creek Greenbelt is one of Austin's most popular and beloved greenbelts, covering more than 1,700 of parkland. With multiple access points, trails, and diverse terrain, it is used for both passive and active recreation by residents.



PARKS AND PRESERVED OPEN SPACE

Integrated into the rest of Austin's urban fabric are its parks (both PARD and non-PARD owned/maintained) and preserved open spaces. This includes everything from large district parks, nature preserves, smaller pocket parks, urban plazas, and even cemeteries. Parks that are part of other counties, like Travis and Williamson County, or owned and managed by independent entities, are included as they are also well-used by Austin residents.



OUR PARK SYSTEM, BY THE NUMBERS

100 YEAR ANNIVERSARY
OF PARD (2028)

17,364+
OF PARKLAND

967,000 → 1.143M
2018 POPULATION 2030 POPULATION

14 — EMPLOYEES
DIVISIONS

700 & 1,000+
FULL-TIME PART-TIME & SEASONAL



MUSEUMS, ARTS &
CULTURAL CENTERS



PLAYGROUNDS



RECREATION
CENTERS



MIXED-USE
FIELDS



TRAIL MILES



TENNIS COURTS



PUBLIC/PRIVATE
PARTNERSHIPS



COMMUNITY/
SENIOR GARDENS



OFF-LEASH DOG
AREAS



PARKS



GOLF COURSES



POOLS

Environmental Features

- PARD Park (owned and/or maintained)
- Other Non-PARD Open Space
- Waterways

Political Boundaries

- County Boundaries
- City of Austin
- Austin Limited Purpose Planning
- Austin 2 Mile ETJ; 5 Mile ETJ
- Beyond Austin Jurisdiction

Transportation

- MetroRail Commuter Line (Existing/Under Construction)
- Other (non-passenger) Rail Lines

- Downtown Austin
- Airport

PARD Recreation / Community Centers

- Pickfair Community Center
- YMCA North Austin Community Recreation Center
- Gustavo "Gus" L. Garcia Recreation Center
- Northwest Recreation Center
- Virginia L. Brown Recreation Center
- Dottie Jordan Recreation Center
- Hancock Recreation Center
- Turner/Roberts Recreation Center
- Austin Recreation Center
- Alamo Recreation Center
- Delores Duffie Recreation Center & Britton, Durst, Howard & Spence Building
- Givens Recreation Center
- Oswaldo A. B. Cantu / Pan-American Recreation Center
- Lorraine "Grandma" Camacho Activity Center
- Metz Recreation Center
- Parque Zaragoza Recreation Center
- Danny G. McBeth Recreation Center & Annex Building
- South Austin Recreation Center
- Montopolis Recreation Center
- Dittmar Recreation Center
- Dove Springs Recreation Center

Source: PARD Annual Report, 2018 Fiscal Year

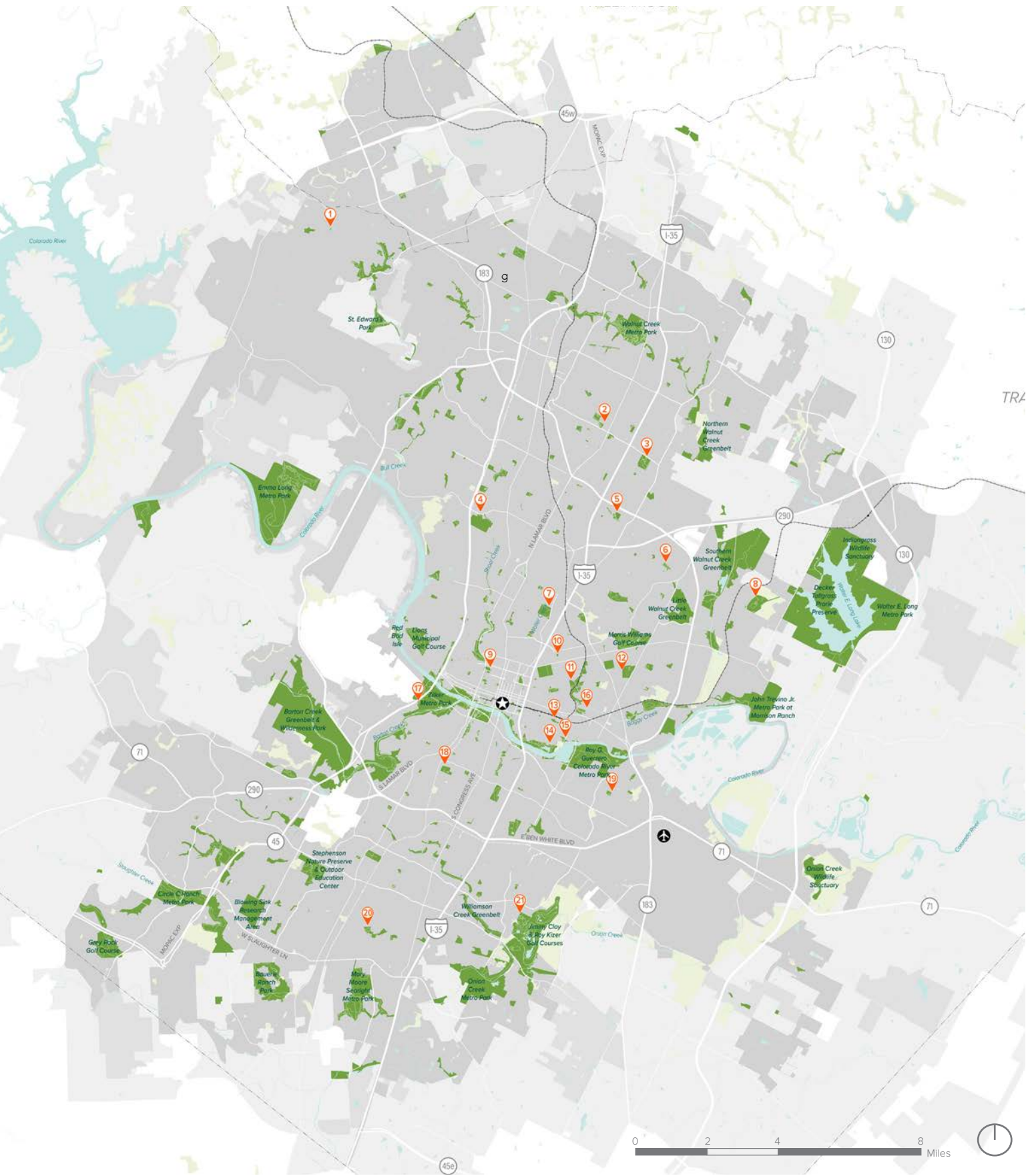


FIGURE 4. EXISTING PARK SYSTEM
Source: WRT.

PARK PLANNING AREAS

In order to coordinate local needs with system-wide needs in an efficient and consistent way, PARD has sub-divided the City of Austin into 26 park planning areas. The park planning areas remain the same each year, while census boundaries and council districts change with population shifts, making them useful for tracking and monitoring park improvements and needs. These

planning areas were developed in the 1970s as a means for collecting data over time. Park planning areas are numbered with the lowest numbers closer to the urban core, and the larger numbers at the periphery.

For the purposes of the LRP, the individual park planning areas are grouped into six geographic combined planning areas: North, East, Southeast, Southwest, West, and Central. The intent is for the combined planning areas to approximate the way residents and visitors might make

use of the local park system – what facilities and amenities are accessible to them and how they relate to one another. Chapter 5 includes a customized set of short and long-term strategies for how to maintain and invest in the local park system in a balanced and holistic way.

The combined planning area groupings allow PARD to better meet needs and aspirations that are more specialized or larger in scale, like a new nature center or a metro park.

Individual Park Planning Areas

The **CENTRAL** combined planning area captures the majority of Austin's Urban Core. Dominated by residents aged 18-65 with small household sizes, it has the highest population & employment densities with healthy growth expected in both.

1 2 3 9 17

The **NORTH** combined planning area has the second highest population & employment densities in the city but is more racially diverse than Central with more youth and larger household sizes.

4 5 6 7 8 21 22

The **EAST** combined planning area has one of the lowest population densities with the highest proportion of black residents, highest poverty rate and a higher youth population. It also has the highest projected population growth and substantial expected job growth.

10 11 23

The **SOUTHEAST** combined planning area has the highest proportion of Hispanic residents and the second highest poverty rate along with the second highest youth population. Healthy population growth and substantial job growth are expected here.

12 13 24 25

The **SOUTHWEST** combined planning area has mid-level population and employment densities with minimal population growth but substantial employment growth expected and the highest proportion of white residents.

14 15 16 26

The **WEST** combined planning area has the lowest population and employment densities, with minimal growth expected and has the highest proportion of both senior residents and youth.

18 19 20

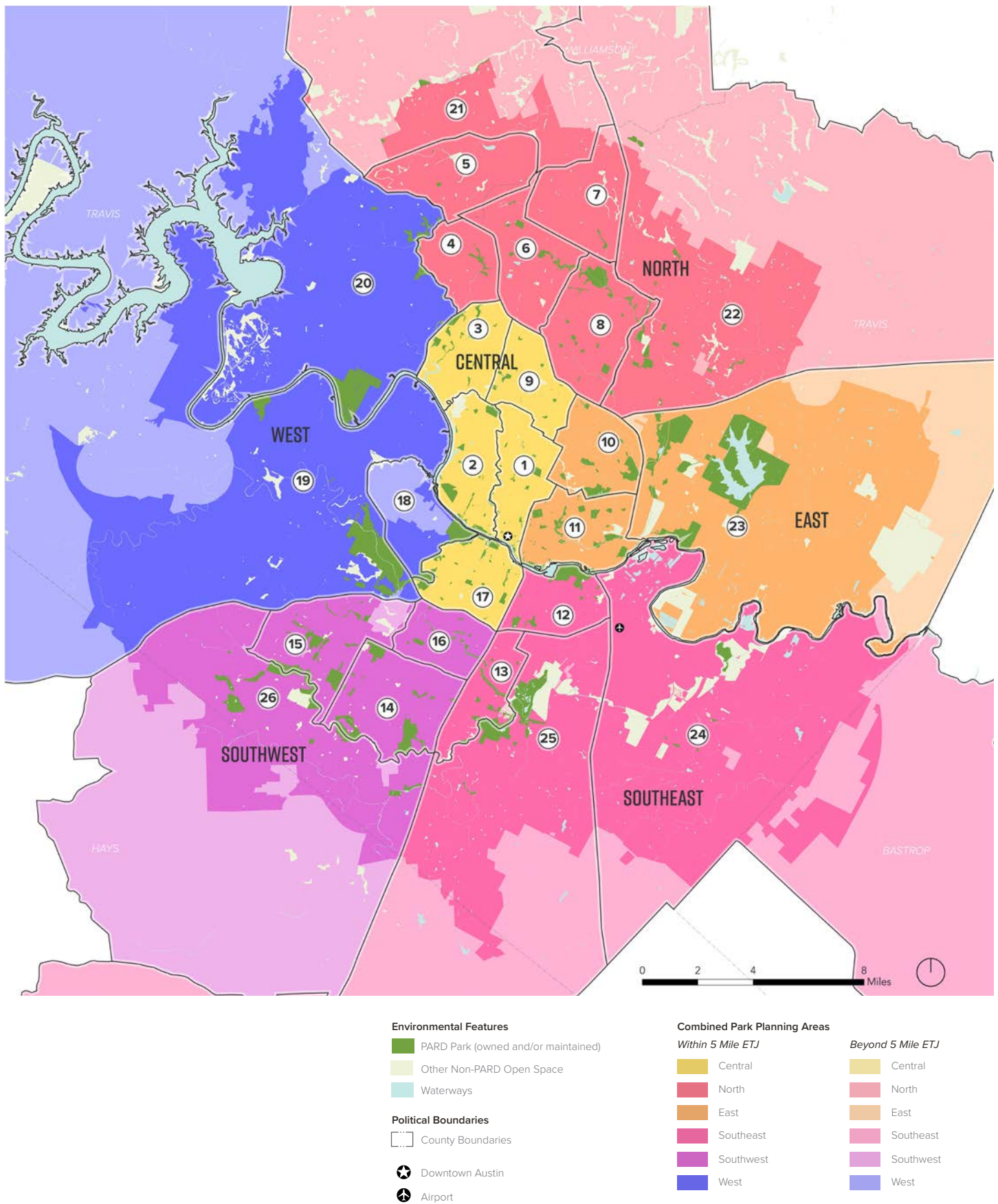


FIGURE 5. PARD'S INDIVIDUAL & COMBINED PARK PLANNING AREAS
Source: WRT.

PARK TYPES

The 10 park types help to shape the way that we manage and develop parks to enhance the balance and diversity of the system while keeping in mind local needs and specialized features that are unique to a particular park or community. Each type is described below.

In addition to these 10 park types, PARD also maintains cemeteries, which provide space for burial, mourning and reflection with passive recreational facilities such as trails and benches.

All-Purpose		Size (acres)	Service Area	Access	Feature Mix
METROPOLITAN	Focus on natural resource values and recreational diversity. Often include water-based recreation and environmental education.	201+	citywide	Major Arterials (All Transport Modes)	DISTRICT MIX + More Large, Specialized Features and Facilities
DISTRICT	Sites for major indoor facilities, specialized/large outdoor facilities. Natural features may play a more central role in the park.	31-200	2 mile	Minor Arterials (All Transport Modes)	N-HOOD MIX + Indoor, Large/ Specialized Outdoor Athletics
NEIGHBORHOOD	Typically located in the center of a single neighborhood or in conjunction with an elementary school or a greenbelt. Local recreation focus.	2-30	1 mile	Collector Streets (Bike & Pedestrian)	POCKET MIX + Compact / Multi-Purpose Outdoor Athletics
POCKET	Serve high-density areas not well served by other public parks. May be non-green spaces (plazas, courtyards, paseos, pedestrian malls).	up to 1.99	up to 1/4 mile	Collector Streets (Bike & Pedestrian)	Trails, Playscapes, BBQ/ Picnic Areas, Gardens
BUTTON	Provides smaller park spaces	0.25 or less	up to 1/4 mile	Collector Streets (Bike & Pedestrian)	Playscapes, Nature Play, Passive Uses
Special Purpose	size and service area varies depending on use.				
PRESERVE	Focus on natural resource & habitat conservation with minimal or no recreational facilities.				
GREENBELT	Linear natural feature-focused open spaces intended for passive recreational use, flood control and water quality preservation.				
SCHOOL	Slightly smaller than Neighborhood Parks with recreational facilities responding first to the student population, then to the neighborhood.				
GOLF COURSE	Golf courses including 9- and 18-hole courses.				
OTHER SPECIAL	Varies.				

PARD Parks
(owned and/or maintained)

ALL-PURPOSE

- Metropolitan
- District
- Neighborhood
- Pocket

SPECIALIZED

- Nature Preserve
- Greenbelt
- School
- Cemetery
- Golf Course
- Other Special Purpose

Environmental Features

- Other Non-PARD Open Space
- Waterways

Political Boundaries

- County Boundaries
- City of Austin
- Austin Limited Purpose Planning
- Austin 2 Mile ETJ; 5 Mile ETJ
- Beyond Austin Jurisdiction

Transportation

- MetroRail Commuter Line (Existing/Under Construction)
- Other (non-passenger) Rail Lines

- Downtown Austin
- Airport
- PARD Recreation / Community Center

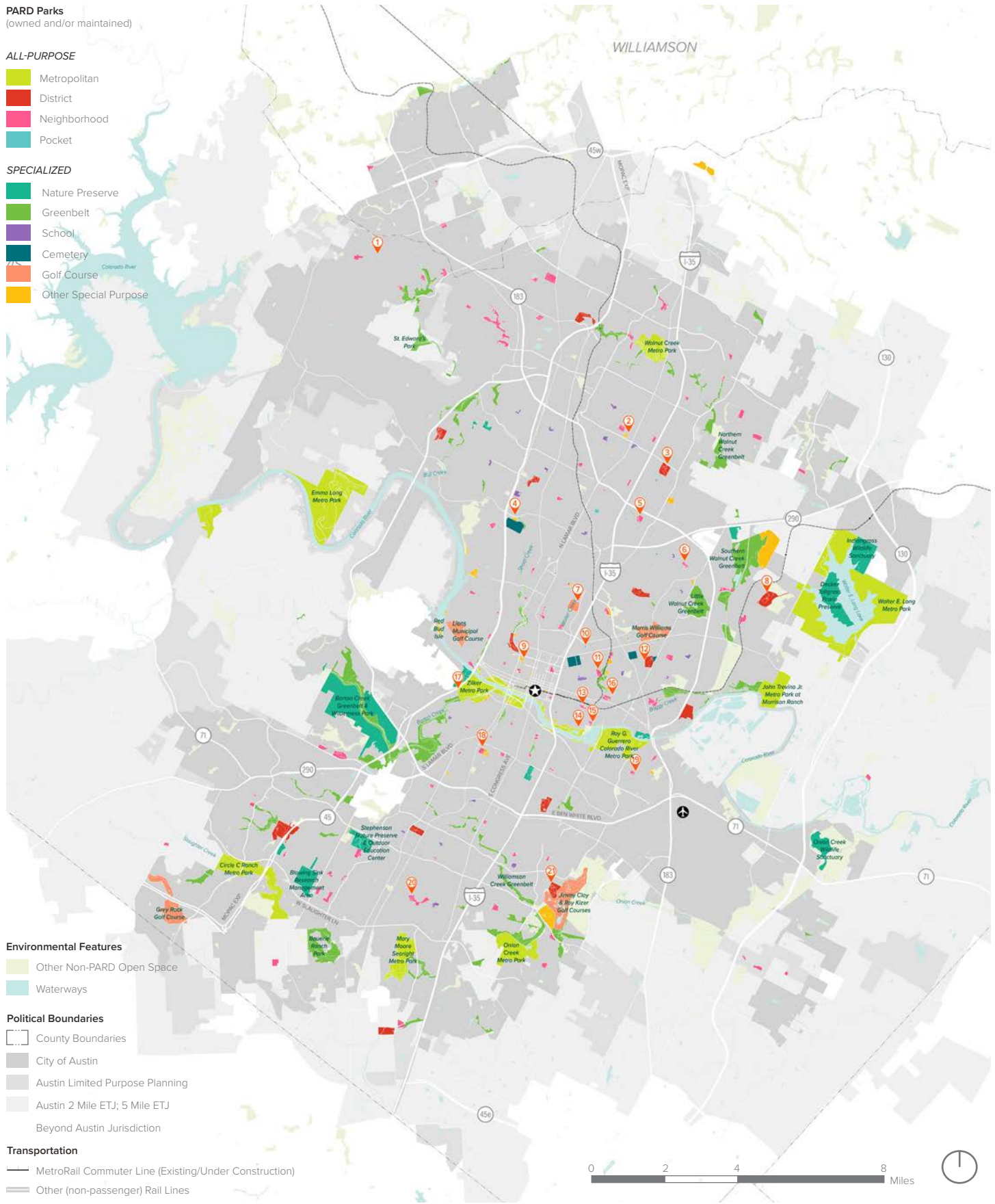


FIGURE 6. EXISTING PARD PARKS BY TYPE

Source: WRT.

NON-PARD PARKS & OPEN SPACE

The PARD park system is complemented by a wide variety of other parks, open spaces, and land preserves that are owned and managed by independent entities. Many of these spaces are valuable and well-used by Austin residents and visitors. Public access may be limited in environmentally sensitive areas. These non-PARD parks and open spaces include:

28% OF
AUSTINITES VISIT
TRAVIS COUNTY PARKS

17% OF AUSTINITES
VISIT LCRA PARKS

THESE VALUABLE NON-
PARD PARKS & OPEN
SPACE RESOURCES
WILL BE TAKEN INTO
CONSIDERATION AS
IMPORTANT CONTEXT
AS FUTURE PARD
INVESTMENTS ARE
CONSIDERED.

Non-PARD Preserves

Balcones Canyonlands Preserve (BCP) Land

One of the nation's largest urban preserves, it provides habitat for a number of rare and endangered plant and animal species found nowhere else on earth, and is cooperatively owned and managed.

Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) Parks

LCRA owns and operates more than 40 parks, recreation areas, and river access sites along the Colorado River.

State of Texas Parks

The State Parks Division is responsible for protecting, interpreting and managing cultural and natural resources of statewide significance and providing outdoor recreation and learning.

County Parks

Provide county residents a system of community parks, signature parks and nature preserves linked by greenbelts, riparian corridors and trails.

Other City of Austin Open Space

Spaces owned or managed by other City of Austin departments and programs.

Other Jurisdiction Parkland

Private Community Gardens

PARD Parks

Other Open Space

This category, which is not shown on the map to the right, includes all other open space land uses such as the quasi-public Homeowners Association (HOA) and Municipal Utility District (MUD) outdoor common spaces.

FACILITY DISTRIBUTION ANALYSIS

Austin’s park system offerings are diverse and the location of facilities varies across geographies. This map series shows where there are concentrations of or a lack of different park facility types, grouped by: Nature, Passive Recreation, Active Recreation, and Arts & Culture. The city’s park planning areas are grouped into North, Central, East, Southeast, Southwest, and West. For this analysis, the number of each facility type per resident is calculated for each combined park planning area and then compared against the citywide average.

Grouping facilities thematically in this way and comparing

them against a citywide status quo enables a more robust understanding of how to balance facility types. For instance, active recreation facilities can sometimes crowd out the passive and natural experiences residents and visitors are seeking to find in their parkland. By looking at the ratio of Nature Facilities vs. Active Recreation Facilities in a given part of the city, it becomes possible to consider how these facilities can best complement one another to support a wider variety of park uses that are well-matched with the unique needs and preferences of their community.

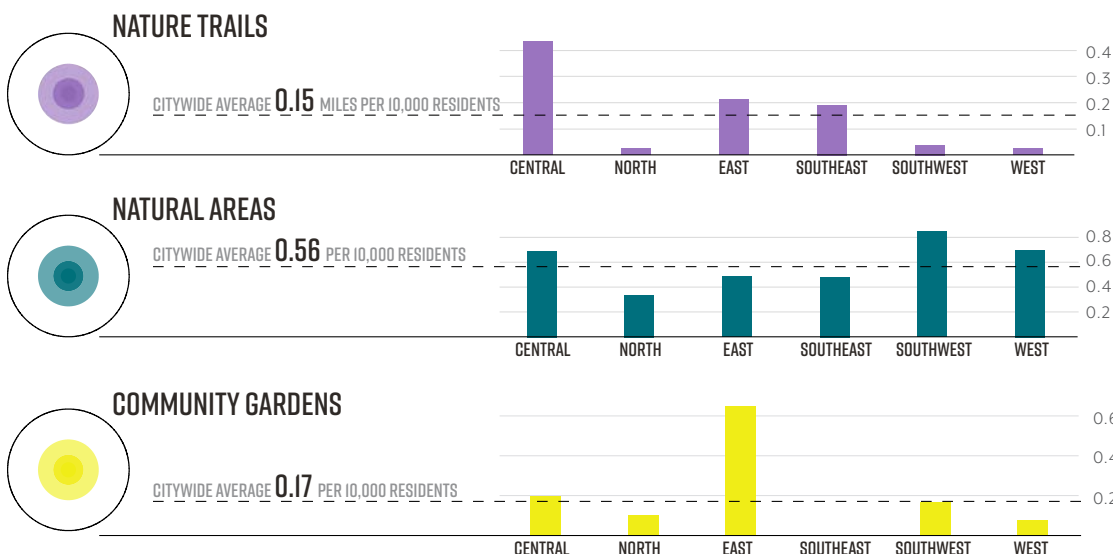
NATURE FACILITY DISTRIBUTION

This grouping of facilities help connect Austin residents and visitors to the natural environment through immersive experiences in unstructured, wild, cultivated, and natural spaces.

We have heard throughout this process that natural experiences are one of the strengths of the park system and something residents are eager to maintain, protect, and enhance as the park system continues to grow.

The three facility types considered under this theme are:

- + **Nature Trails** – defined as PARD owned and managed trails within the park system. This facility type was measured and compared by miles of trail per 10,000 Austin residents in each combined planning area.
- + **Natural Areas** – defined as nature preserves and managed habitat areas owned and managed by PARD.
- + **Community Gardens** – defined as gardens located on parkland that community members can join and cultivate a dedicated plot.



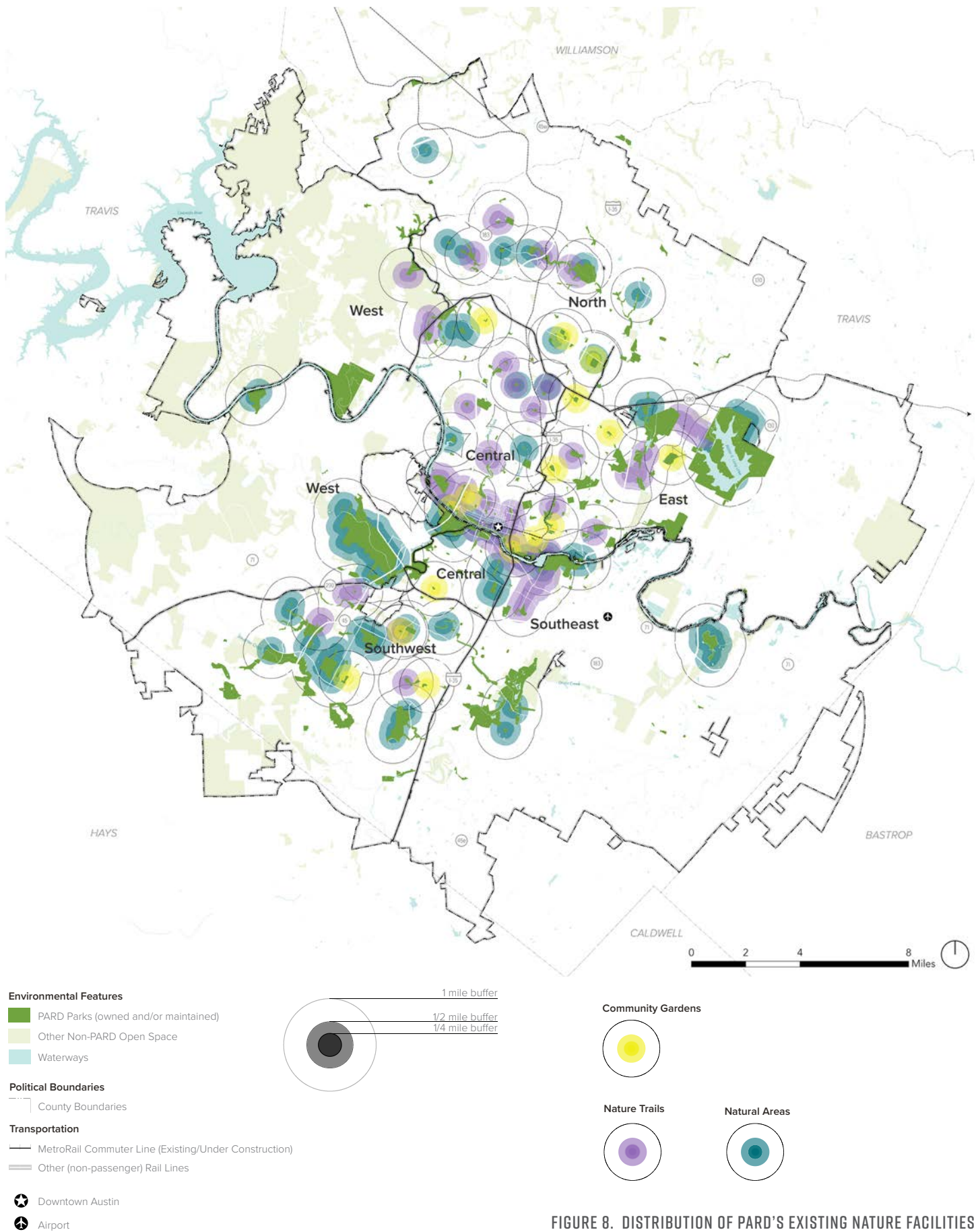


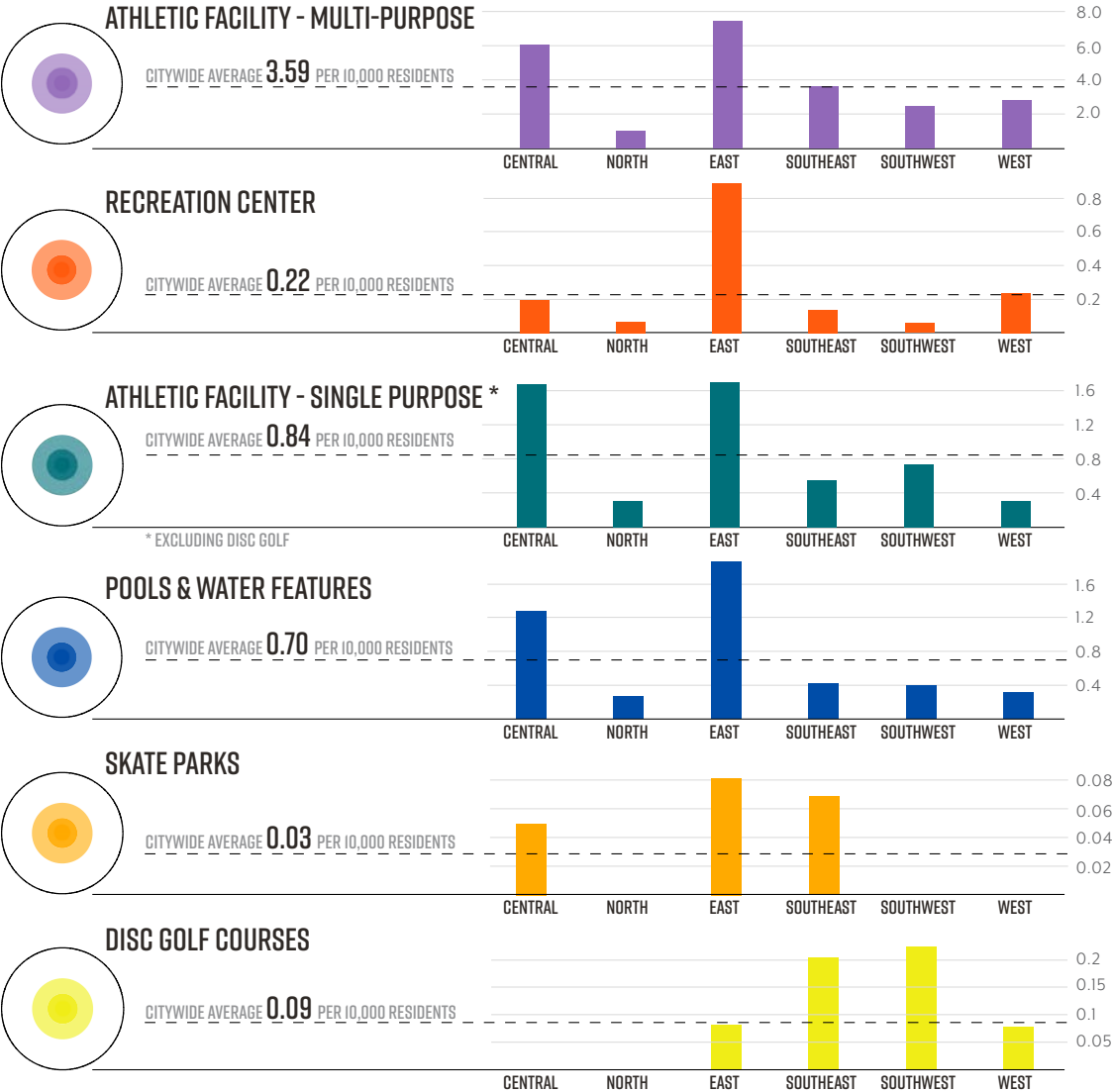
FIGURE 8. DISTRIBUTION OF PARD'S EXISTING NATURE FACILITIES
Source: WRT.

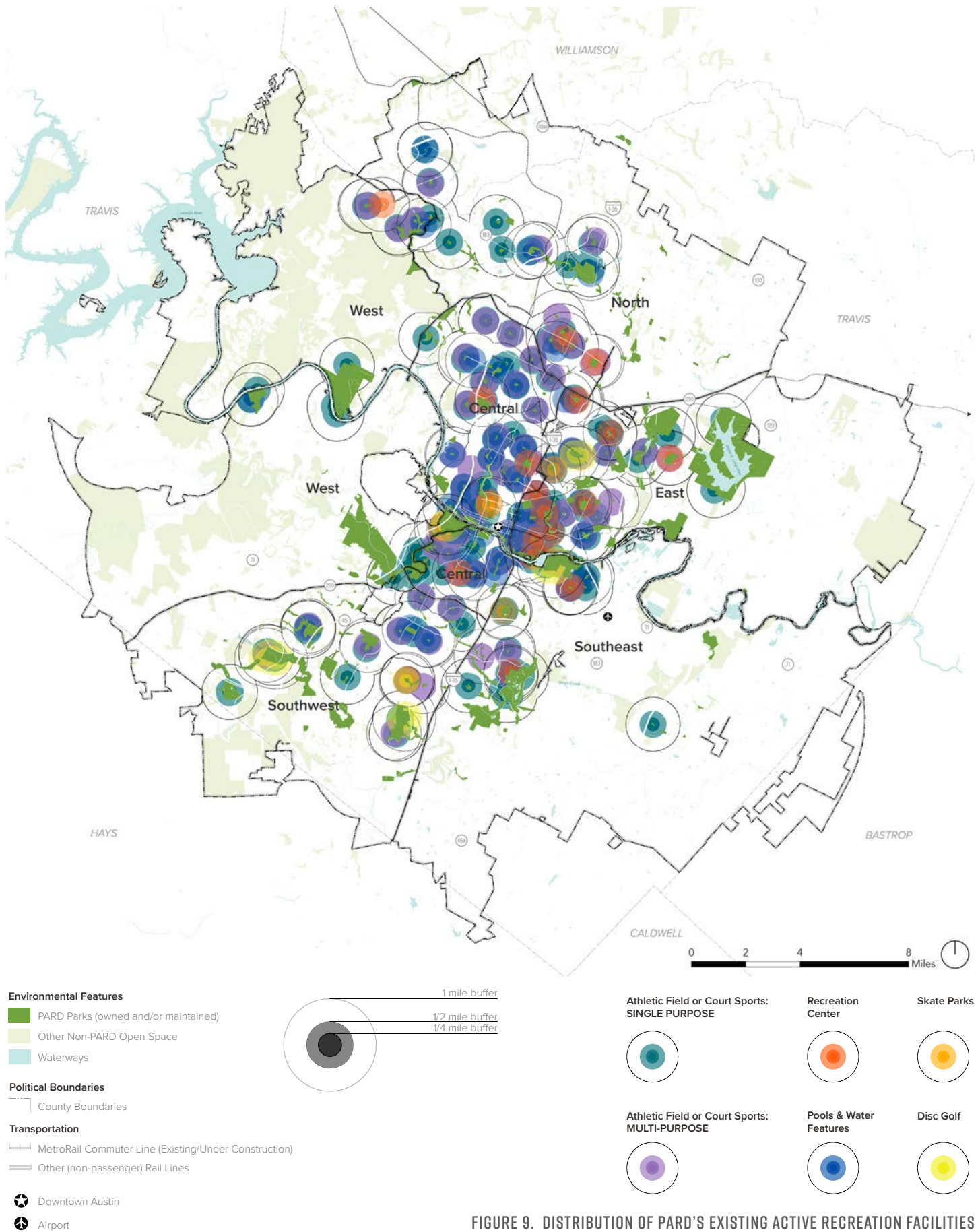
ACTIVE RECREATION FACILITY DISTRIBUTION

Austin has a rich history of organized sports and athletic programming in the park system. As a result, a wide variety of facilities support active recreation in parks. These facilities not only support active and healthy lifestyles, they also help bring residents together and make athletic programming affordable and accessible to a wider range of individuals than private athletic programs can serve.

Based on emerging national trends in recreation and Austin resident feedback, there are a few important distinctions:

- + **Single-purpose fields and courts** are grouped together to emphasize the overall facility patterns more so than the representation of each sport. Sport preferences often vary from neighborhood to neighborhood and so the specific allocation of different types of sport facilities is best dealt with at a more local level.
- + **Disc Golf Courses**, however, are included as a stand alone category because of the consistent citywide interest in the future of these facilities that we heard throughout the process.
- + **Multi-purpose athletic facilities** are separated from single-purpose ones because of the increasing interest in more flexible, unstructured facilities that can serve a wide variety of users rather than having a fixed, single use.

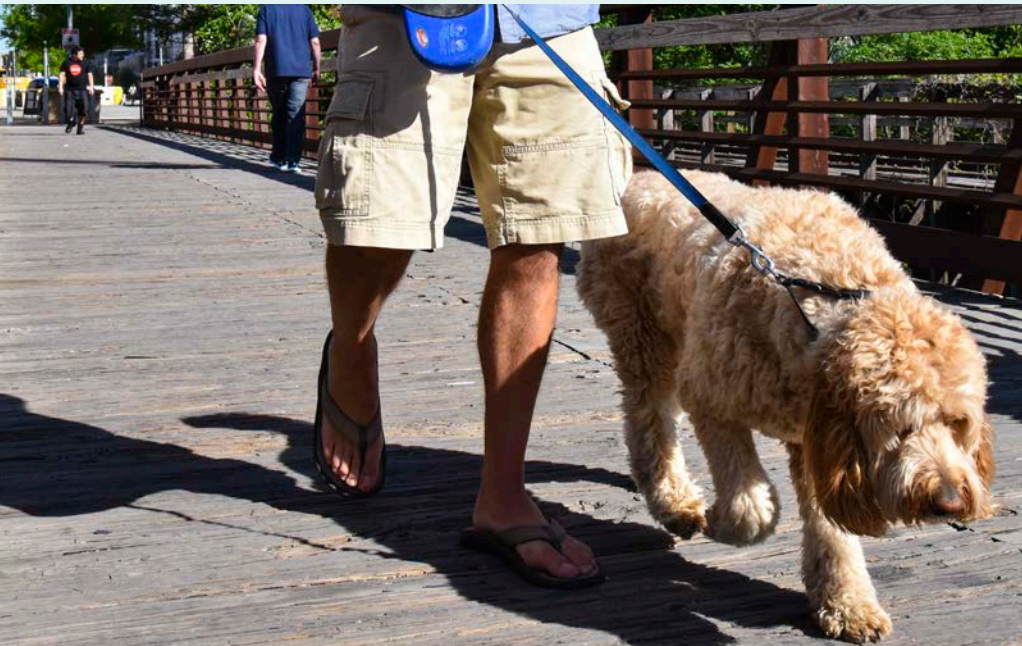






ON PARD'S CANINE USERS

AUSTINITES HAD A LOT TO SAY ABOUT HOW TO IMPROVE AMENITIES FOR DOG OWNERS WITHOUT DIMINISHING THE ENJOYMENT OF OTHER PARK USERS. NEW OFF-LEASH DOG AREAS & BETTER ENFORCEMENT ARE KEY.

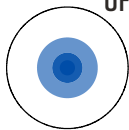


Source: PARD

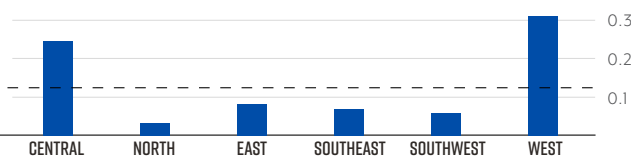
PASSIVE RECREATION FACILITY DISTRIBUTION

Passive recreation facilities help Austinites unplug, relax, reflect and get some relief from the intensity of living in the city. These offer places to sit and share low-key time with family and friends or to have a quiet moment alone in a beautiful, comfortable and safe place. Off-leash dog areas, picnic areas, pavilions, and scenic overlooks are just some of the more substantial facilities that support this important use of Austin's parks, but smaller interventions like benches can also support passive recreational uses of parkland.

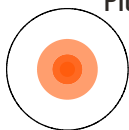
OFF-LEASH DOG AREAS



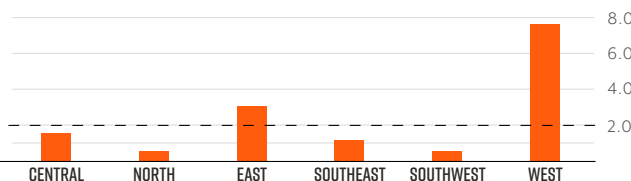
CITYWIDE AVERAGE **0.12** PER 10,000 RESIDENTS



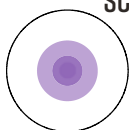
PICNIC AREAS & PAVILIONS



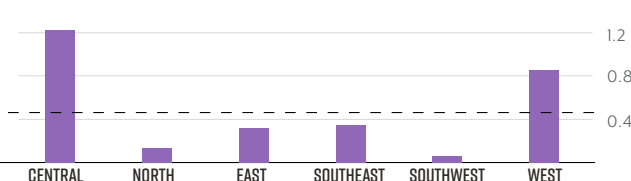
CITYWIDE AVERAGE **1.97** PER 10,000 RESIDENTS



SCENIC OVERLOOKS



CITYWIDE AVERAGE **0.46** PER 10,000 RESIDENTS



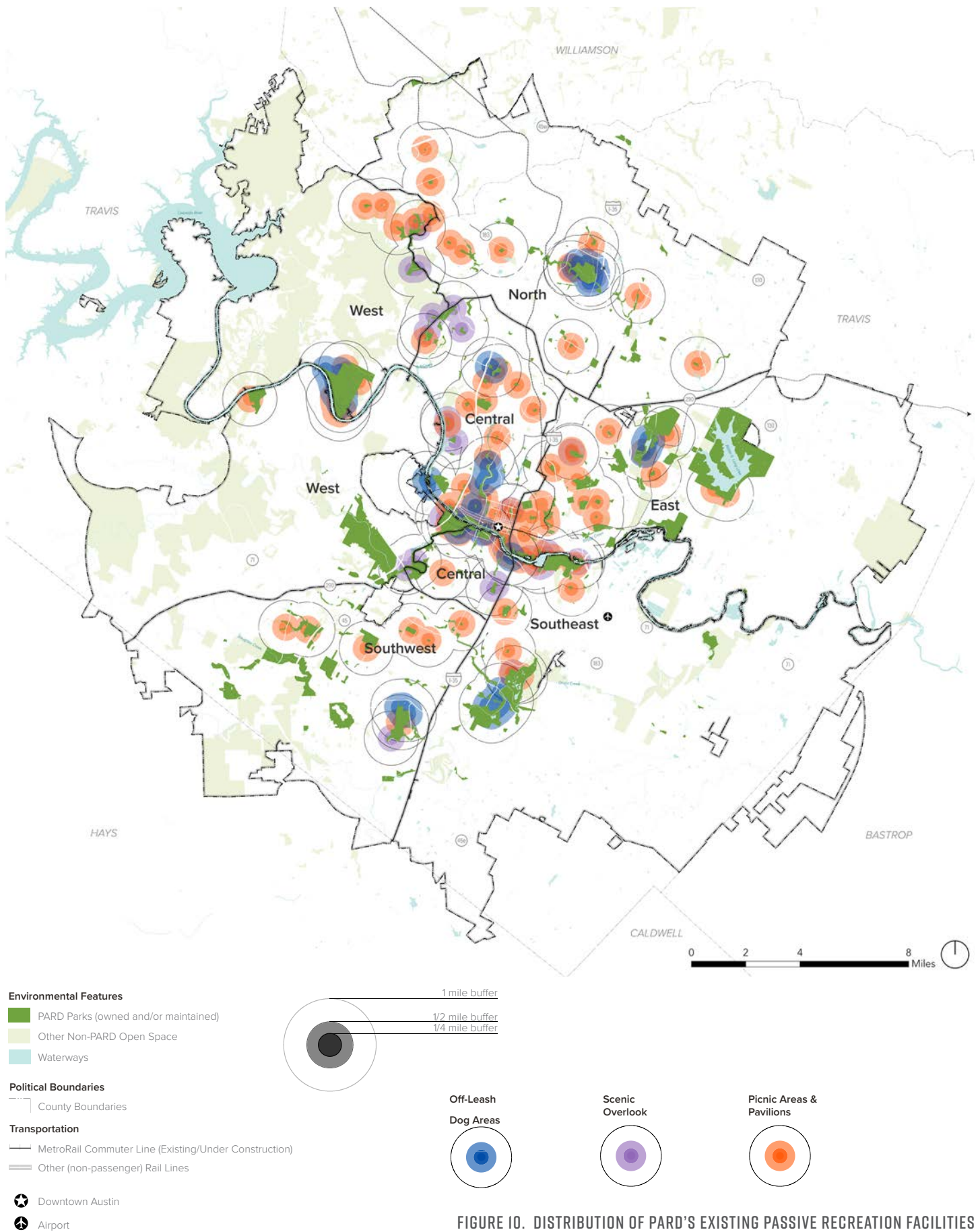


FIGURE 10. DISTRIBUTION OF PARD'S EXISTING PASSIVE RECREATION FACILITIES
Source: WRT.



ARTS & CULTURE, AT A GLANCE

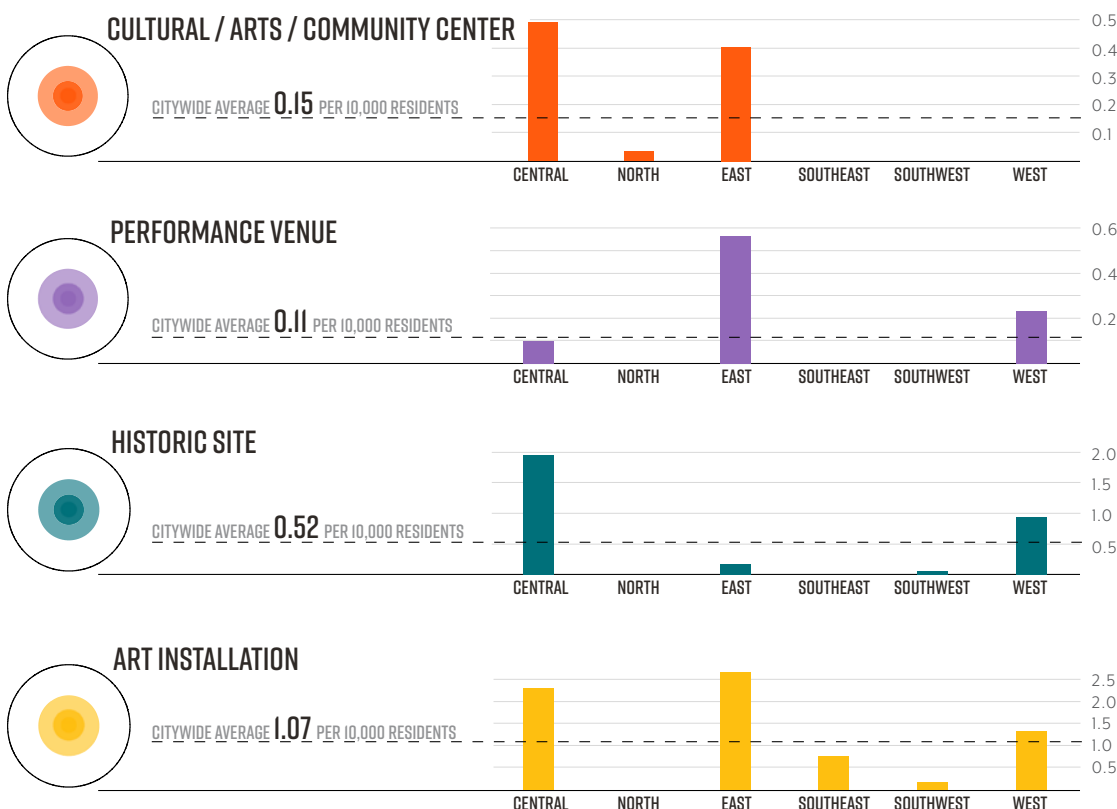
ARTS AND CULTURE SPARK THE IMAGINATION AND CREATIVITY OF AUSTINITES EVERY DAY! THESE FACILITIES WELCOMED OVER 400,000 VISITORS IN AND HOSTED 1,302 PROGRAMS IN 2018.

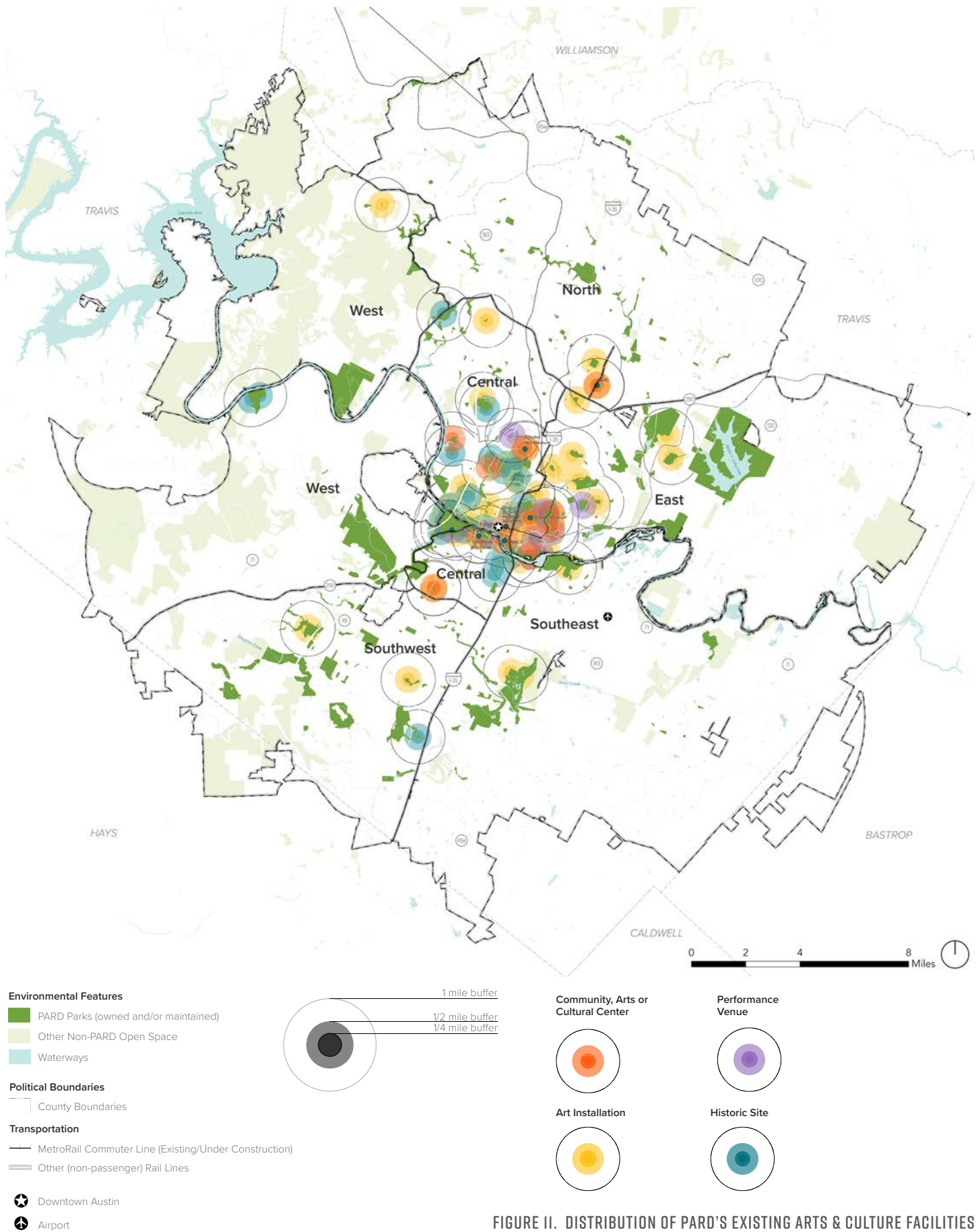


Source: PARD

ARTS & CULTURE FACILITY DISTRIBUTION

Parks provide an important space for communities to learn about and celebrate history. These arts and cultural facilities support communities in expressing their identity, showcase the dynamism and creativity of community members, and foster dialogue and social cohesion. Some of the more significant facilities that support arts and cultural uses of the PARD park system are cultural, arts and community centers, performance venues, historic sites, and art installations. Austin's museums and cultural centers provide the community with family-friendly, free, and low-cost engagement with the languages of music, dance, film, theater, and art.





HOW DO WE COMPARE?

BENCHMARKING

Benchmarking provides a glimpse into how Austin's park and recreation system compares with other cities across the country. Austin is unique in many ways, and its park system reflects

this. It is the state capital of Texas and is home of the flagship campus of the University of Texas. The city is rapidly growing, with a population increase of almost 23% since 2010. Long known for its thriving music scene, the city is also a hub for the technology and software industries. The selection of

comparison cities aims to reflect this unique combination in order to offer the best representation of how Austin compares to its peer cities. The data collected is for comparison purposes and based on TPL's 2019 ParkScore Index.

COMPARISON CITY SELECTION CRITERIA

The Trust for Public Land (TPL), working with PARD, selected comparison cities based on:

Growth

Austin is experiencing similar growth to Atlanta (14% increase in population since 2010) and Dallas (13% increase in population since 2010).

Regional Similarities

San Antonio and Dallas were included to capture elements that are unique to the region.

Climate and Weather

Cities were also selected that experience similar weather to Austin, as a similar climate means comparable challenges.

Population Density

Finally, cities were selected that were comparable in population density.

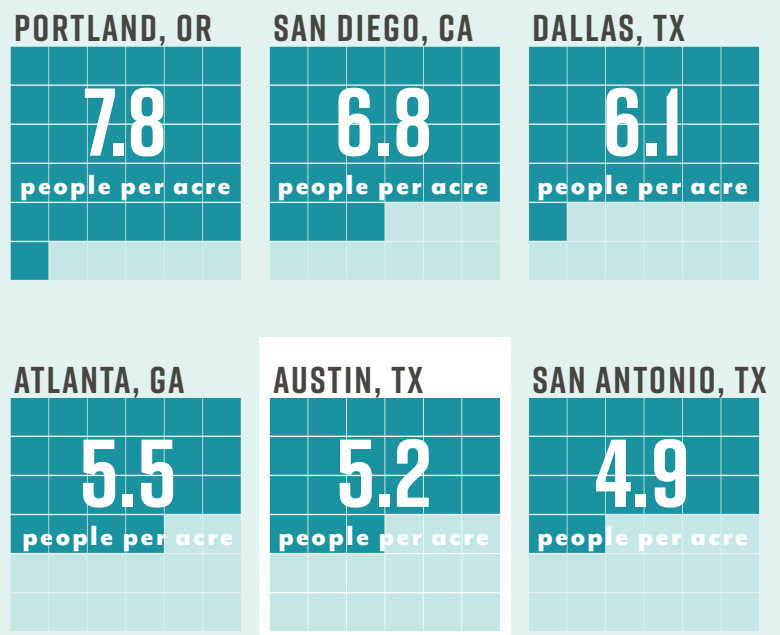


FIGURE 12. PEER CITIES BY POPULATION DENSITY
Source: WRT, TPL.

PARK SYSTEM SPENDING

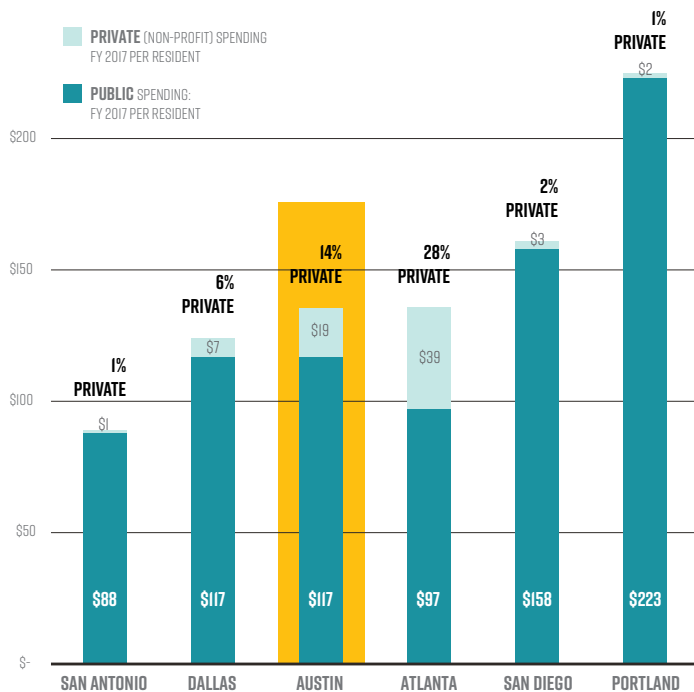


FIGURE 14. PARK SPENDING BENCHMARKING

Source: WRT, TPL.

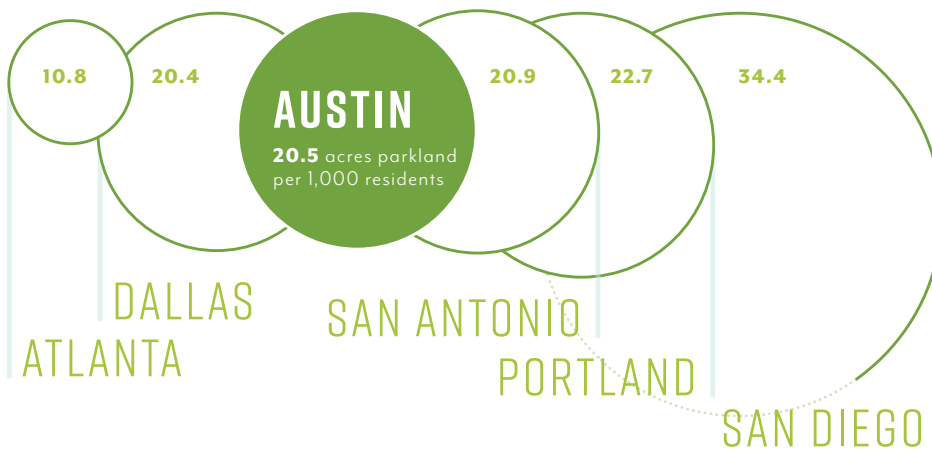
Public Spending

Per capita, Austin spends less than comparison cities Portland and San Diego, is on par with Dallas, and spends more than San Antonio and Atlanta. This includes all spending by a city agency that owns or operates parkland within city limits.

Private Spending

Spending by non-profits (foundations, conservancies, etc.) makes up a significant portion of park investment, totaling 14% of all park investment in Austin in 2017 and includes spending by the Austin Parks Foundation, Downtown Austin Alliance, The Trail Foundation, and local conservancies related to parks and recreation.

Non-profit spending can provide extra support above and beyond what public dollars are often able to do, but should not replace public agency funding and government support.



PARK SYSTEM OVERVIEW & ACCESS

The City of Austin has an expansive park system, but only 65% of residents live within walking distance of a park. This is low in comparison to peer cities, however it is consistent with the national average. Cities across the country are challenging themselves to improve walkability to parks and recreation.

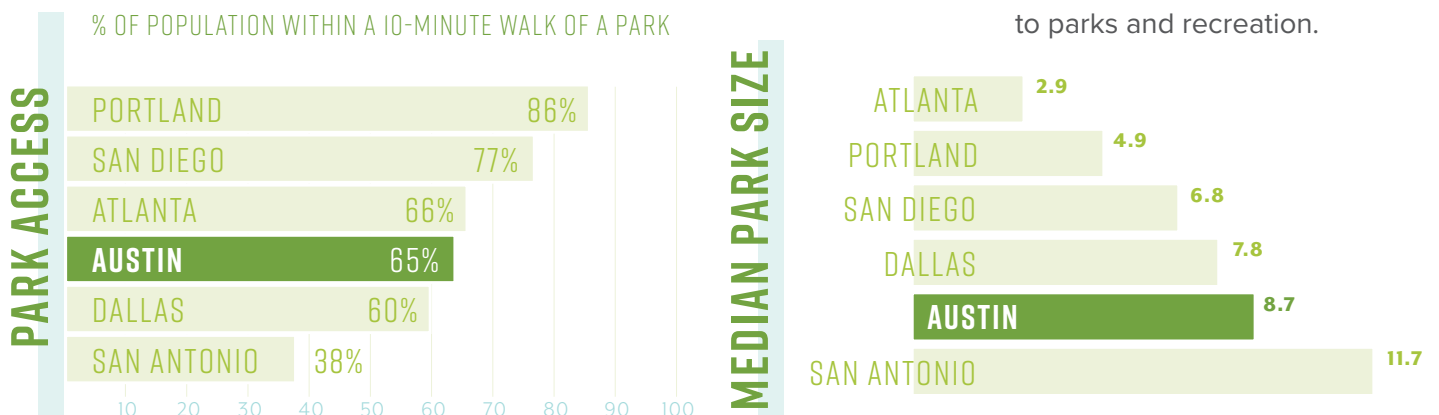


FIGURE 13. PARK SYSTEM BENCHMARKING

Source: WRT, TPL.

FACILITIES & AMENITIES

Austin is well-served in terms of recreational amenities and facilities, surpassing peers in certain areas such as miles of bikeway and disc golf courses, but falling short in others. Austin might consider expansion of multi-use fields for baseball, soccer, and softball. The city should explore strategies to increase nature programming and nature facilities as well as the expansion of multi-generational facilities that promote community programming and recreation.

* PER 10,000 RESIDENTS
** PER 100,000 RESIDENTS



- * PER 10,000 RESIDENTS

** PER 100,000 RESIDENTS
- PORTLAND, OR

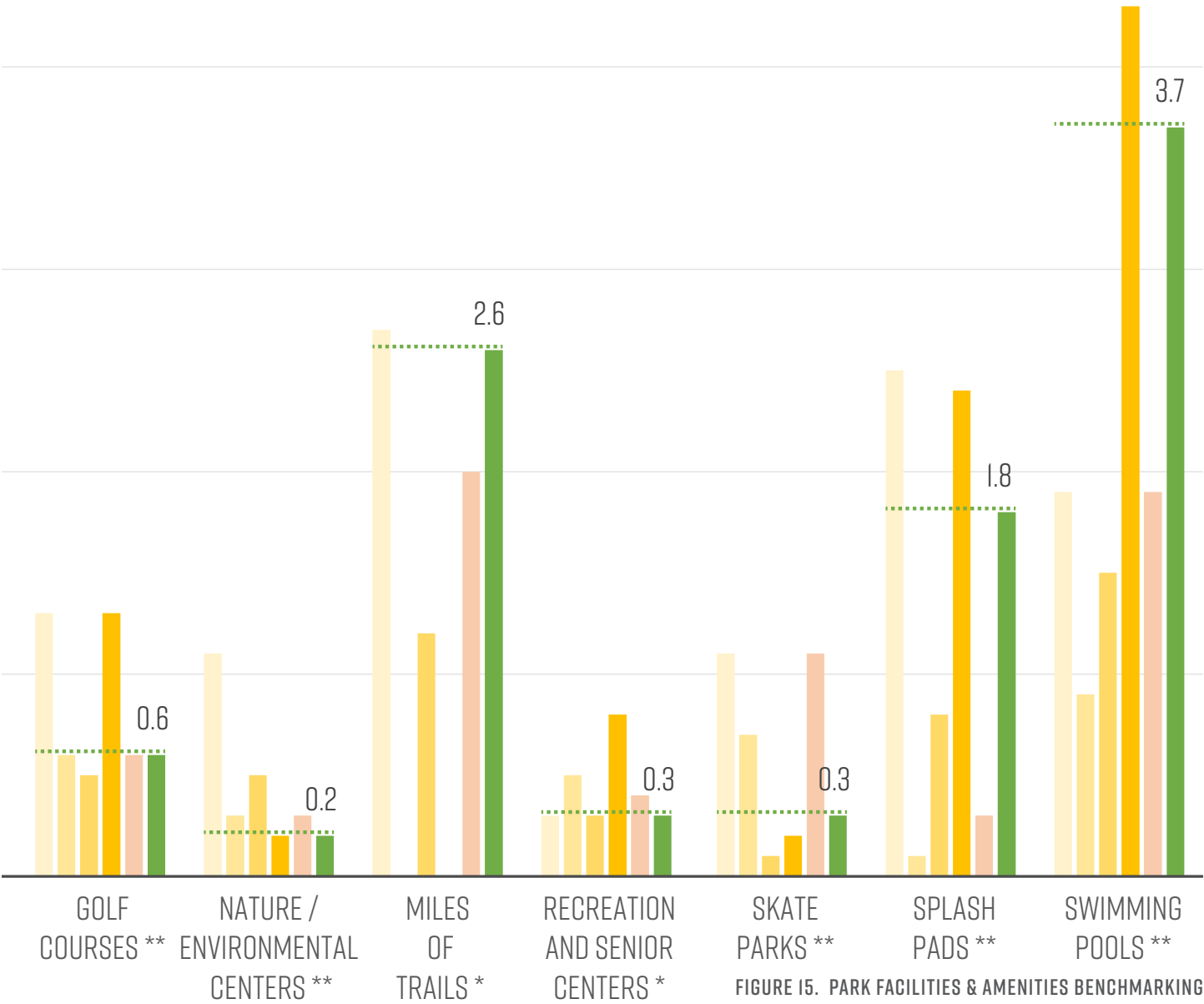
SAN DIEGO, CA

DALLAS, TX

ATLANTA, GA

SAN ANTONIO, TX

AUSTIN, TX





Kayakers in Austin. Source: PARD

OUR FUTURE

Chapter 4 provides the vision and strategies for *Our Parks, Our Future* over the next decade. Key themes derived from community input through surveys and public meetings provide the guiding framework for the plan's strategies and actions. Chapter 4 describes the strategies as they apply citywide and includes some sample actions. Chapter 5 applies the strategies more specifically by geography using the PARD planning areas and includes a detailed action table.

IN THIS CHAPTER

CITYWIDE THEMES & KEY ISSUES

- + How Growth Impacts Park Planning

CITYWIDE STRATEGIES

- + A. Ensure Parkland Offers Relief from Urban Life
- + B. Expand and Improve Park Access for All
- + C. Activate and Enhance Urban Public Spaces
- + D. Align Programs with Community Interest
- + E. Optimize and Improve Efficiency of Operations

CITYWIDE THEMES & KEY ISSUES

HOW GROWTH IMPACTS PARK PLANNING

As a city that is in a period of fast-paced growth and change, PARD must proactively plan for expansion of the park system each year to keep up with population growth and maintain a similar level of service for all residents.

AREAS WITH HIGH POPULATION DENSITY

As Austin's population increases and some areas of the city densify, it is important to ensure access to parks and open space, particularly in more urban areas where residents may have little private outside space.



AUSTIN'S URBAN CORE

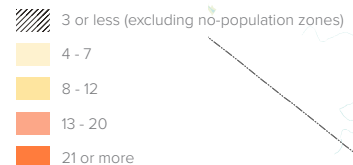
WHAT IS IT?

The Urban Core is defined as the area bounded by Highway 71 on the south, MoPac on the west, and 183 on the north and south. This area is important because it encompasses the majority of the high-density areas in the City of Austin. It has a more compact urban development pattern and has more multi-modal transportation system that allows residents to get around without cars.

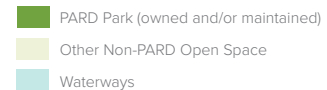
WHY DOES IT MATTER FOR PARKS?

An area is considered park deficient if there is no park, private parkland, or school park within 1/4 mile inside the urban core or within 1/2 mile outside the urban core. Inside the urban core, land dedication is capped at 15% of the site area unless the Land Use Commission approves increased land dedication to address a critical shortage or provide connectivity.

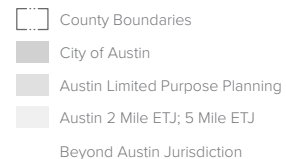
Population Density People per Acre



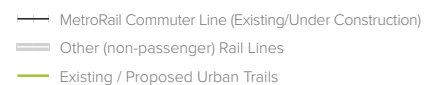
Environmental Features



Political Boundaries



Transportation

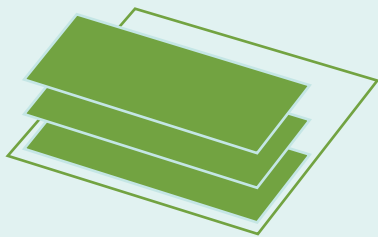


HAYS

HIGHLY DEVELOPED AREAS

Existing highly developed areas are highlighted in blue, ranging from lightest blue (medium density) to darker blue (higher density). Figure 17 shows the most developed areas are located in and around the Urban Core and along major road corridors. As Austin grows, the city envisions a more compact and connected development pattern supported by a complete transit, bicycle, trail, and sidewalk network. This new pattern would reduce the need to drive from place to place.

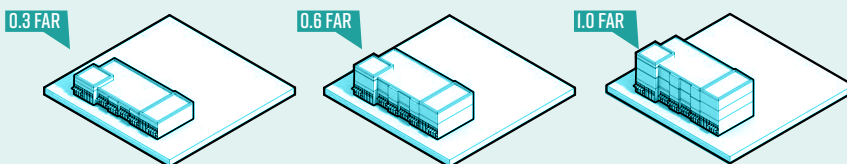
Creative strategies are needed to address park needs in areas of higher density where land values may be higher. Potential strategies include improving connections to parks and open space, developing new entrances to parks that improve access, and developing infill parks and/or shared use agreements for privately owned public spaces.



FLOOR AREA RATIO (FAR)

WHAT IS IT?

A way of describing the density of physical development, it is the ratio between the total floor area of a building and the area of the lot in which it sits.



WHY DOES IT MATTER FOR PARKS?

High-FAR areas may be challenging places to acquire new parkland because they typically have less available land and higher land values.

Existing Development Density 2016 Existing Land Use FAR, Quantiles

- High (0.32 or more)
- Medium High (0.24 - 0.31)
- Medium (0.19 - 0.23)

Environmental Features

- PARD Park (owned and/or maintained)
- Other Non-PARD Open Space
- Waterways

Political Boundaries

- County Boundaries
- City of Austin
- Austin Limited Purpose Planning
- Austin 2 Mile ETJ; 5 Mile ETJ
- Beyond Austin Jurisdiction

Transportation

- MetroRail Commuter Line (Existing/Under Construction)
- Other (non-passenger) Rail Lines
- Existing / Proposed Urban Trails

- Downtown Austin

- Airport

- PARD Cultural Center

- PARD Recreation / Community Center



HAYS

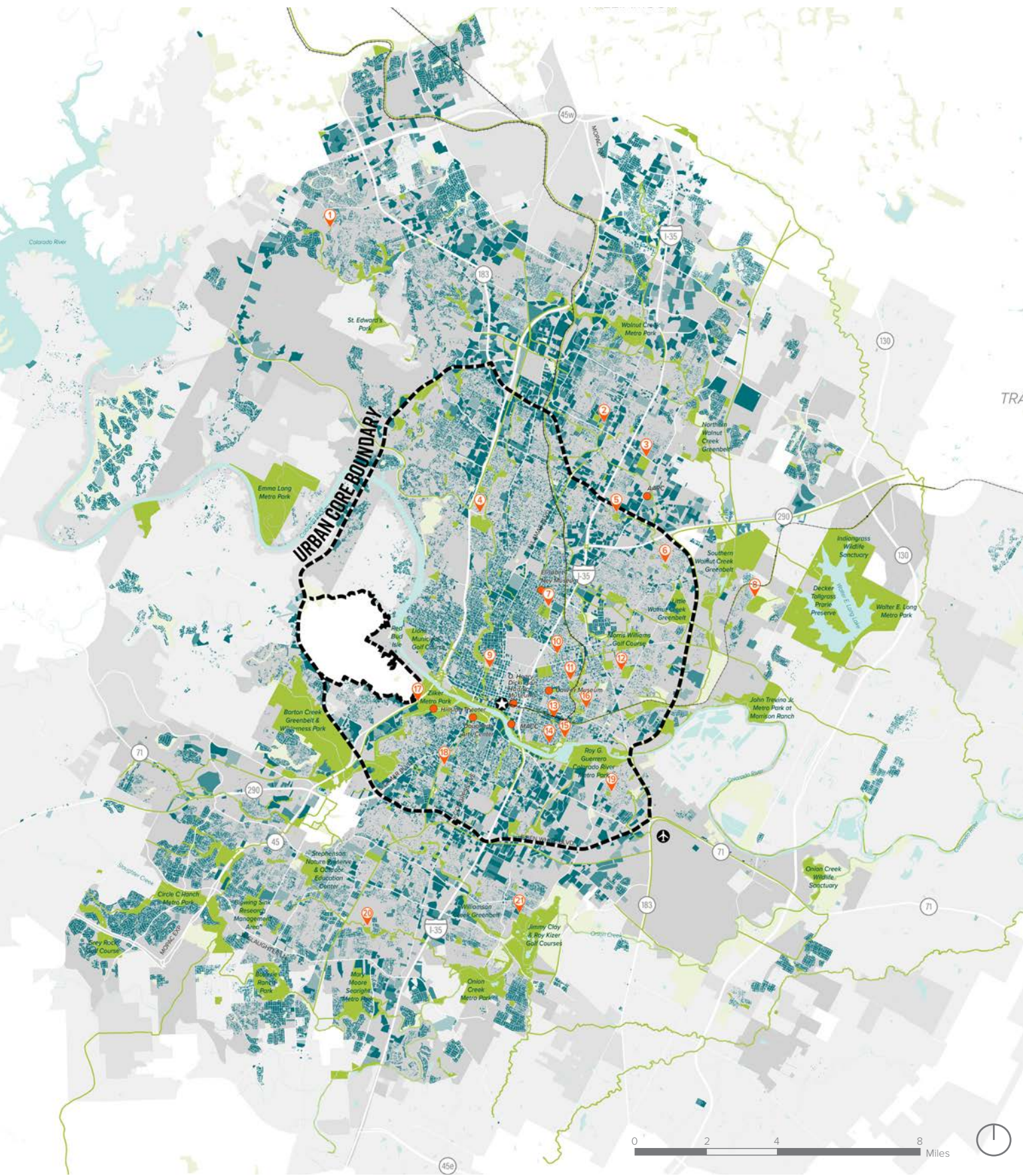


FIGURE 17. HIGHLY DEVELOPED AREAS MAP
 Data Source: 2016 Existing Land Use, City of Austin.

AREAS AT RISK OF DISPLACEMENT

Since the 1990s, Austin’s housing prices and cost of living have been on the rise. While once a very affordable city, many long-time residents find it difficult to afford the increasing costs of housing, transportation, healthcare, and childcare. Many cities are struggling with the risk of displacement as young adults and older “empty-nesters” are moving back to urban areas, reversing past trends of disinvestment. As one of the fastest growing large cities in the country, new residents are attracted from other cities and towns in Texas – and from across the country to Austin’s employment opportunities, arts and music scene, creative culture, recreation, and natural beauty.

In 2018, the City of Austin sponsored a UT study of gentrification to better understand trends and areas where communities are at risk for displacement. The 2018 “Uprooted” study identified areas where gentrification has already occurred, areas where displacement is beginning to occur, and neighborhoods that are susceptible or at risk where increased market activity will likely result in displacement of current residents. The displacement risk mapping and analysis can serve as a tool for PARD in planning new or improved parks, and as part of a larger citywide conversation and policies to allow people to choose to stay in their homes and neighborhoods. Holistic citywide programs and housing policies are needed to limit displacement.

KEY CITY INITIATIVES

THERE IS NO ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL SOLUTION TO GENTRIFICATION.

In 2017, Austin City Council adopted the first ever Strategic Housing Blueprint with a goal of adding 60,000 affordable units in 10 years. The blueprint built on strategies from Imagine Austin and focused on five community values:

- + prevent households from being priced out of Austin
- + foster equitable, integrated, and diverse communities
- + invest in housing for those most in need
- + create new and affordable housing choices for all, in all parts of Austin
- + help Austinites reduce their household costs

Gentrifying Neighborhood Stage/Typology

- At Risk (Susceptible - increased market activity will likely trigger displacement)
- Stage 1 (Early: Type 1 - displacement is beginning to occur)
- Stage 2 (Dynamic - displacement is well underway)
- Stage 3 (Late - majority of vulnerable population has already been displaced)
- Stage 4 (Continued Loss - few remaining vulnerable populations)

Environmental Features

- PARD Park (owned and/or maintained)
- Other Non-PARD Open Space
- Waterways

Political Boundaries

- County Boundaries
- City of Austin
- Austin Limited Purpose Planning
- Austin 2 Mile ETJ; 5 Mile ETJ
- Beyond Austin Jurisdiction

Transportation

- MetroRail Commuter Line (Existing/Under Construction)
- Other (non-passenger) Rail Lines
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- Downtown Austin
- Airport
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- PARD Recreation / Community Center

HAYS

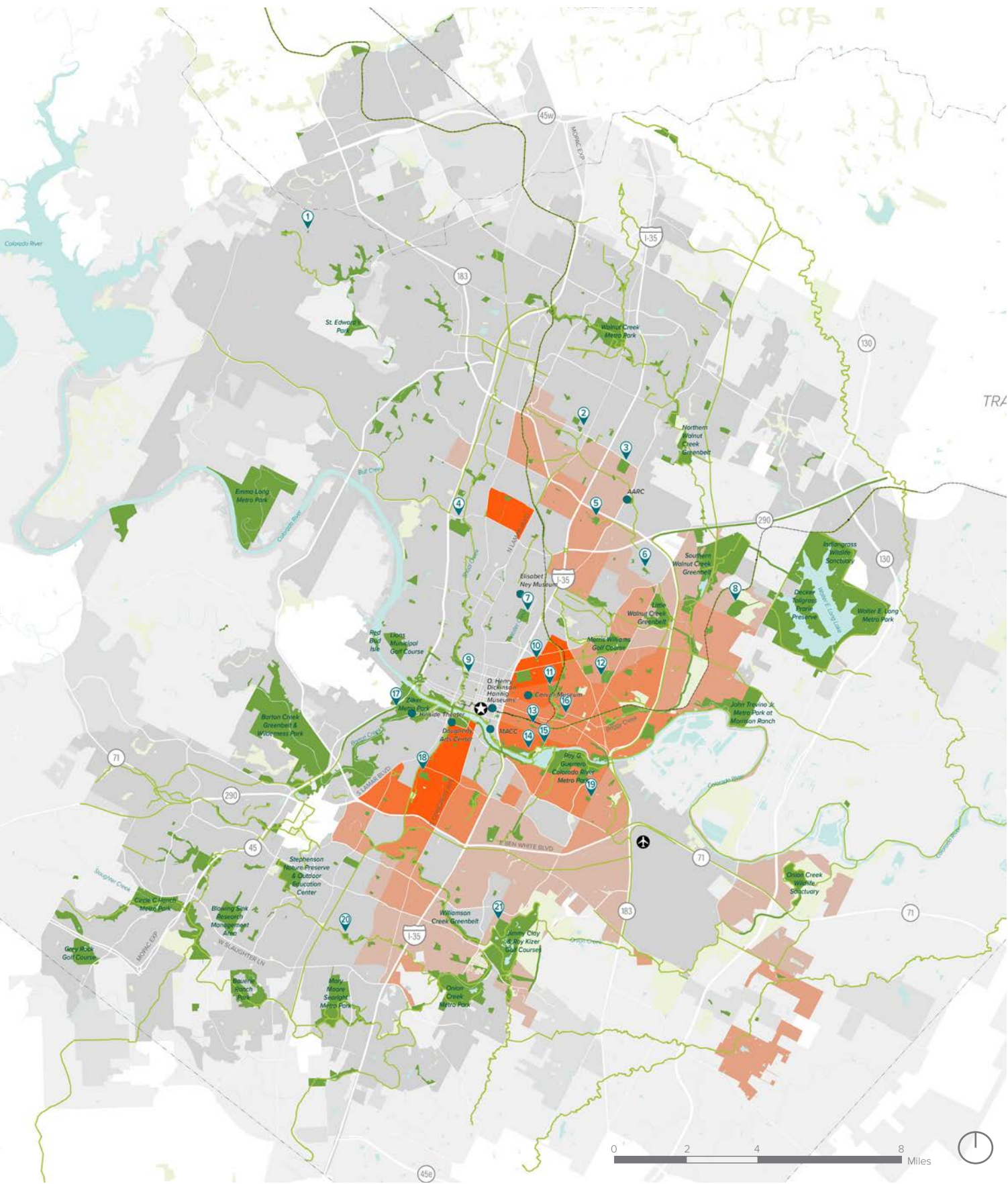


FIGURE 18. AREAS AT RISK OF GENTRIFICATION MAP

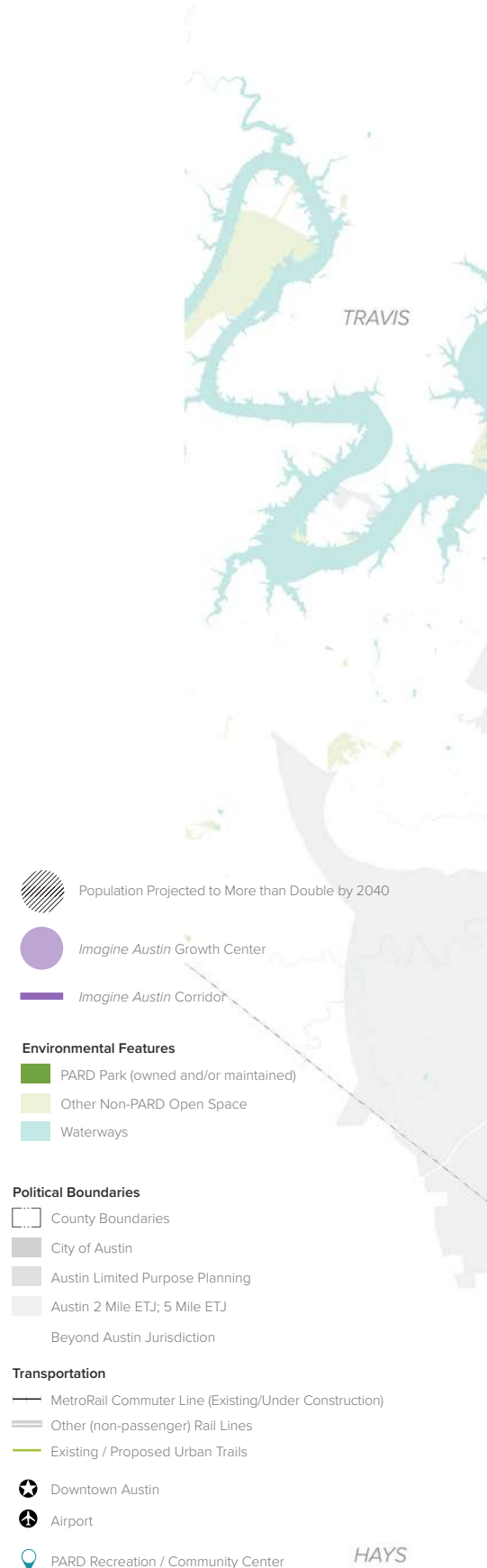
Data Source: 2018 UT Austin Study “Uprooted: Residential Displacement in Austin’s Gentrifying Neighborhoods, and What Can Be Done About It” – Stages of Gentrification Mapping.

IMAGINE AUSTIN GROWTH CENTERS & CORRIDORS

In 2012, the city passed a new community-led comprehensive plan and vision for Austin – one that seeks to direct growth into and along mixed-use centers and corridors, where moving through the city is easier, and residents have easy access to everyday services, jobs, and parks. The *Imagine Austin* growth centers and corridors and the 2040 population/employment growth projection help us to anticipate future park need and plan for long-term park improvements and acquisition in areas where growth is anticipated to occur. Figure 18 highlights and illustrates the overlap between:

- + *Imagine Austin* Centers and Corridors
- + Areas where population is projected to increase by 200% or greater
- + Metro Rail Commuter Line
- + Existing and Proposed Urban Trails (bike or multi-use trails separated from traffic)

The city's population growth requires that PARD continue to add land to the park system to maintain a high level of parkland per person. One essential tool Austin has to expand the park system is the Parkland Dedication Ordinance, which provides a legal tool requiring the dedication of useable parkland or a fee in lieu of land that can be used for acquiring new parkland. The ordinance also helps to ensure that land is acquired in areas of high growth.



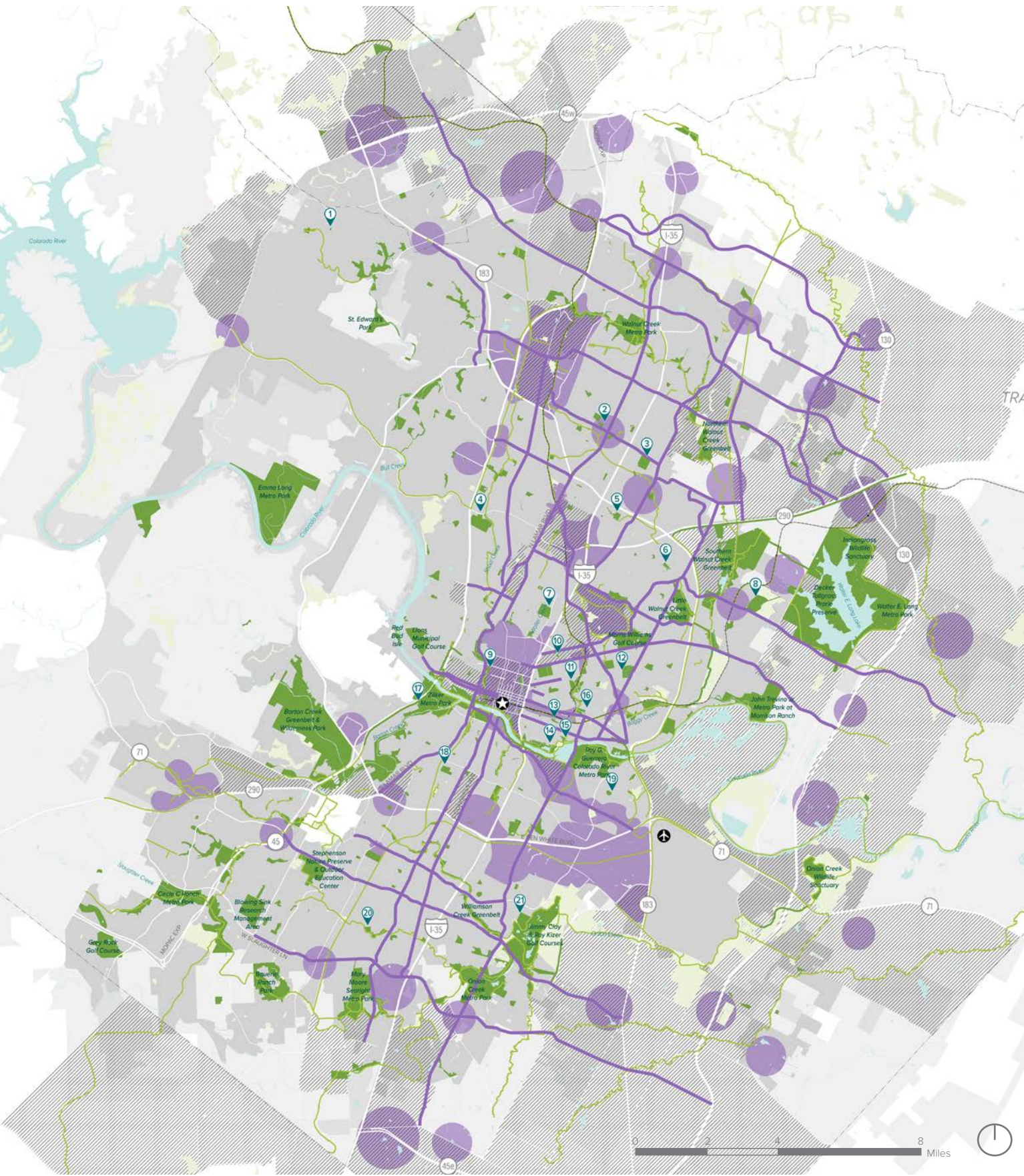


FIGURE 19. IMAGINE AUSTIN GROWTH CENTERS MAP
 Data Sources: Imagine Austin Growth Centers, City of Austin official
 2040 Growth Projection.

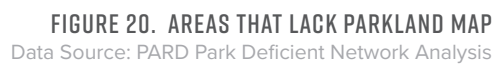
IDENTIFYING AREAS THAT LACK PARKLAND

Realizing the importance of living near parks and open spaces, City Council passed a resolution in 2009 stating that all residents living in the urban core should be within a ¼ mile of a publicly-accessible and child-friendly park (a five-minute walk) and within a ½ mile (10-minute walk) for those outside the urban core. This target is consistent with a national movement led by the Trust for Public Land and partners to encourage a 10-minute walk to park campaign. By mapping areas of the city that are not within the walking distance goal, using the sidewalk, trail, and roadway network, PARD can identify areas that are park deficient, indicating areas that are high priority for the acquisition and development of new land to meet the access to parkland goals.

Figure 20 identifies the areas where there is not enough current parkland to meet the five and ten-minute walk goals. These areas are prioritized for parkland acquisition and development of new parks.

Other strategies to increase access to parkland include improving bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure connecting parks to neighborhoods, identifying ways to increase public access to open spaces which may have limited access now, and considering new entrances into parks since the five or ten minute walk is measured from a park's entrances rather than any point at the boundary. Another priority for PARD is to increase parkland and open space along creeks across the city. This priority creek buffer is shown in blue. The Park-Deficient Area is focused on access and availability of parkland and does not however, take into account the quality or user experience of a park. This mapping should be used in conjunction with other data points - such as park condition assessments and user data, which are described in Chapter 5: Implementation.





CITYWIDE RECOMMENDATIONS

METHOD

The citywide recommendations were developed in two steps. First, the team mapped out the relationships between the priority needs identified in the citywide statistically-valid survey and the community engagement themes that emerged from all other forms of community engagement. Second, the team considered how each of these issues interacted with the growth trends impacting park planning in Austin. The analysis included a review of demographic and social and health equity factors by park planning area and a close review of parks and recreational offerings / needs by combined planning area.

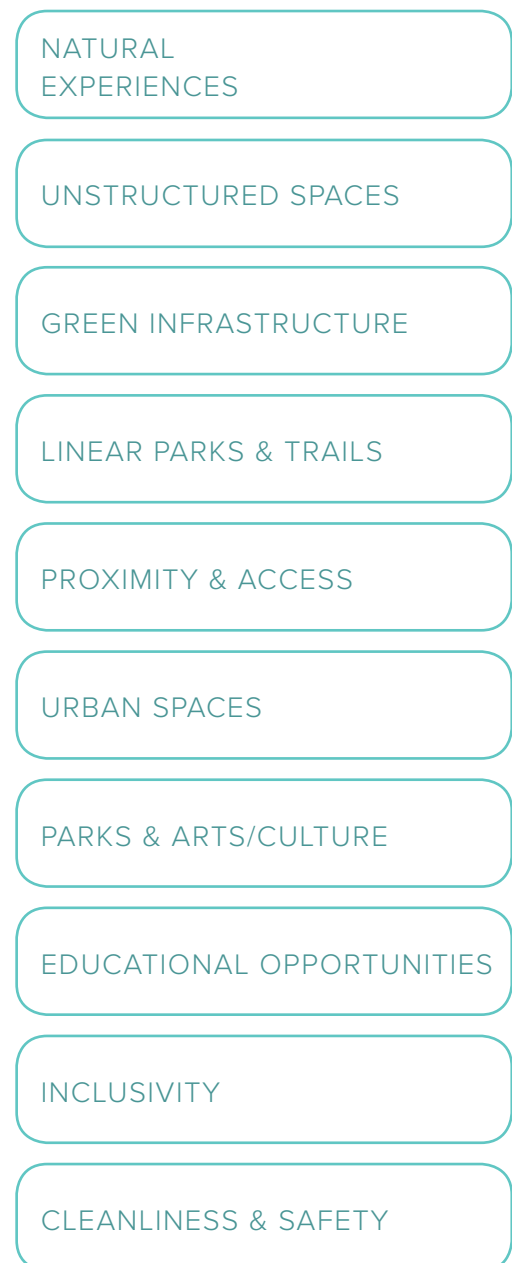
WHAT WE LEARNED

Priority needs from the statistically-valid survey, voices from community members, and information from stakeholders.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT THEMES

We distilled all of the input we received into 10 community engagement themes that informed the plan's strategies.



STRATEGIES

Five citywide strategies organize both large-scale actions and individual planning area recommendations.



ENSURE PARKS ACT AS A RELIEF FROM URBAN LIFE



EXPAND & IMPROVE PARK ACCESS FOR ALL



ACTIVATE & ENHANCE URBAN PUBLIC SPACES



ALIGN PROGRAMS WITH COMMUNITY INTEREST



OPTIMIZE & IMPROVE EFFICIENCY OF OPERATIONS



NATURAL EXPERIENCES	UNSTRUCTURED SPACES	GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE	LINEAR PARKS & TRAILS	PROXIMITY & ACCESS	URBAN SPACES	PARKS & ARTS/CULTURE	EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES	INCLUSIVITY	CLEANLINESS & SAFETY
✓	✓	✓					✓		

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT THEMES



Source: PARD

A. ENSURE PARKS ACT AS A RELIEF FROM URBAN LIFE



The impact of Austin's rapid growth is becoming apparent as Austinites increasingly confront the loss of natural areas and increased development. While this growth provides PARD with new resources and more opportunities, it also means PARD has to guard the park system's role as a relief from and counterpoint to Austin's increasingly urban context. Likewise, the parks must become more flexible and multi-purpose to support a higher intensity and wider variety of park users.

— KEEPING UP WITH DEMAND

21% MIN.
INCREASE IN
PARKLAND IS
NEEDED BY
2028

“Please set aside areas in parks where native plants and wildflowers can grow. Many parks are mowed and weed-wacked with very few natural areas.”

**COMMUNITY
FEEDBACK**
2018

1. Add between 4,000 and 8,000 of new parkland over the next 10 years, maintaining the current standard of 20 acres per 1,000 residents while striving to achieve 24 acres per 1,000 residents.

Acquiring land that can be used for future parks as population grows is a priority for PARD. Austin’s Parkland Acquisition Program selects sites that have the potential to preserve unique natural features, can be developed and maintained as parks, and meet community needs (e.g., in park-deficient areas). To maintain a high park acre per person ratio, PARD will need to acquire parkland at a much higher rate than in recent years.

1.1. Use Level of Service guidelines and park deficient area mapping to help determine and prioritize areas for parkland acquisition and improved access.

1.2. Seek out opportunities to increase public access to non-PARD owned parks and open space that would help to meet the city’s need.

Strategies may include access easements, formalized agreements, shared-use, or land transfer/acquisition.

2. Protect and increase natural areas that support immersive nature experiences and provide space and management for environmental functions and benefits.

Austinites treasure having access to nature and feel this access is threatened by increased development and overly programmed spaces. A connection with natural areas is vitally important for the education of youth, the mental health of residents, and the environmental resiliency and health of the city’s ecosystems. Environmental functions and benefits include stormwater absorption, cleaner air quality, increased wildlife, cooling effect, managed forest succession. The material finishes of these spaces is also significant, with many Austinites expressing a desire for the paths and activity areas in parks to have more rustic, natural finishes such as mulch, sand, gravel, and stone instead of concrete and asphalt.

2.1. Expand greenbelts and trails along creek buffers.
Creek buffers are great locations for expanded

greenbelts and trails that are designed provide crucial flood mitigation and green stormwater infrastructure.

2.2. Create a set of standard materials and finishes that are unique to Austin.

Update the standard materials palette for PARD parks and facilities to (1) reflect the unique natural beauty of the Hill Country and (2) include green materials that reduce impervious surfaces in PARD-owned parks and facilities.

2.3. Use parks as functional landscapes that perform green stormwater infrastructure and flood mitigation roles to enhance resiliency, recreational use, and beauty.

Build on existing partnerships with departments including the Watershed Protection Department (WPD), to create a uniform set of standards and continue building green stormwater infrastructure projects that filter water, improve water quality, and improve environmental and public health. Consider opportunities for vertical greening of buildings and other infrastructure.

2.4. Require the consistent use of native or adapted planting.

Ensure all PARD-led design efforts adhere to planting materials included in the “Grow Green” native and adapted plant guide for Central Texas.

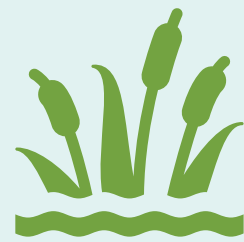
2.5. Work with the Office of Sustainability, Watershed Protection Department, and other partners to support green infrastructure and address gaps in the network.

The city is continuing to improve its network of natural lands, parks, working landscapes, and open spaces. An immediate next step is to analyze areas of strength (that are efficiently used) and areas of deficiencies (gaps in the network) to better understand gaps in the network that can be addressed and better managed in the future.

2.6. Prioritize a comprehensive tree inventory as a baseline to inform increased tree planting on PARD parkland.

Trees not only enhance the design, comfort, and intimacy of park spaces, they also add biodiversity, absorb and filter stormwater, and reduce heat island effect. A tree inventory will help document the ecosystem services value that PARD’s Urban Forest provides, and will inform increased planting and a one-to-one replacement of removed trees over the next ten years.

2.7. Implement strategies to increase shade and Austin’s urban tree canopy as recommended in Austin’s Comprehensive Urban Forest Master Plan.



GREEN STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE

OUR NATURAL
ENVIRONMENT –
TREES, LANDSCAPE,
PLANTS, AND WATER
SYSTEMS – CAN SERVE
AS INFRASTRUCTURE
FOR OUR CITIES.

Within parks and other spaces there is an opportunity to better manage stormwater and enhance water quality. Green stormwater infrastructure uses practices designed to mimic nature and capture rainwater where it falls. Austin has already developed recommendations and guidelines for green stormwater infrastructure practices that can be implemented in parks, including rain gardens, porous paving, rainwater harvesting, and green roofs. Well designed and maintained green stormwater infrastructure can reduce negative impacts of pollutant runoff into Austin’s creeks and rivers.



Source: PARD

AUSTIN AQUATICS

\$40M
PLANNED
CAPITAL
PROJECTS

(2018
GO BOND)



3. Make it easier for Austinites to spend time interacting with water.

For many Austinites, interacting with water – swimming, fishing, boating, or just dipping toes in the water – is an important part of life in the city. Aquatics facilities have been a key element of PARD’s network from the beginning, starting with Barton Springs and the New-Deal-era outdoor pools in the urban core. Outdoor pools also provide important public health benefits during heatwaves and help ensure that all children have an opportunity to learn how to swim. However, these aquatic facilities are not evenly distributed throughout the city and maintenance and staffing have historically been a challenge. Moving forward, it will be important to elevate the quality of these facilities and introduce new facilities so that all Austinites can experience the joy and calming effect of taking a break at the water on a hot day.

3.1. Implement the Aquatics Master Plan.

- 3.1.1. Pursue opportunities to upgrade some pools to Regional Aquatic Centers that provide a greater diversity of programming, training, and amenities. Upgrade facilities, per the Aquatics Master Plan at the following sites: Balcones, Garrison, Northwest, Deep Eddy.
- 3.1.2. Pursue opportunities to upgrade some pools to Community Pools. Per the Aquatics Master Plan, upgrade facilities at the following parks: Dick Nichols, Dittmar, Dove Springs, Givens, Montopolis, Springwoods, Walnut Creek.
- 3.1.3. Consider new aquatic facilities in underserved locations. Colony Park/Lakeside Community, Northeast (east of I-35 and north of Highway 290), Northwest (Long-term replacement of Canyon Vista), Southeast, and Southwest.
- 3.1.4. Consider creating a Natatorium (indoor pool) to provide a year-round, climate-controlled aquatics facility as referenced in the Aquatics Master Plan. The natatorium would be an ideal facility for on-going lifeguard and staff training and could be jointly funded through partnerships.

3.2. Assess aquatic facilities on a regular basis to determine remaining lifecycle, the feasibility of continued maintenance, and the potential need to decommission or redevelop the site considering community need.

3.2.1. Explore partnerships with aquatic service providers to share capital, operations, and maintenance costs.

3.3. Create a fishing and boating guide.

3.4. Explore opportunities to increase public access to waterways, including creeks, rivers, and lakes.

Determine where public access is appropriate, safe, and sustainable based on site-specific factors (e.g., water depth and speed, stability and slope of banks, habitat and ecosystem vulnerability, water quality, and resources available for maintenance of access points).

3.4.1. Increase more interactive opportunities on Lady Bird Lake, Lake Austin, Colorado River, and Walter E Long Lake.

3.4.2. Ensure public access to waterways in park and trail corridor plans and along greenbelts where access is appropriate, safe and sustainable.

3.4.3. Implement recommendations for water-based recreation found in Town Lake Metro Park, Emma Long, and Walter E. Long Park Plans.

3.4.4. Protect and expand future public access to the Colorado River waterfront through land acquisition, parkland dedication, and trail easements.

Community food forests are spaces that imitate the organization of a forest at a small-scale. These forests have a variety of planting, vertical and horizontal, that provide edible fruit, nuts, and vegetables.

They provide multiple benefits – access to fresh produce, wildlife habitat, a canopied park space, and a space for social interaction.

**COMMUNITY
FOOD FOREST
HANDBOOK**

Chelsea Green, 2018

4. Increase the number of community gardens.

Community gardens are seen as both a mental health and community building program and as an extension of nature-based educational programming – a way of enabling residents and especially youth to interact with and learn about the natural environment around them. Austin established the PARD Community Gardens Program in 2009 to have a single point of contact and streamline the process for creating community gardens on City land, including school parkland.

“Community gardens...
allow children to learn
how natural foods are
grown.”

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

2018

4.1. Establish a community garden at every Metro Park.

Work with local partners to create a community gardening space at each Metro Park in the city. Assess the staff capacity and partnerships required at each location.

4.2. Ensure equitable distribution of community gardens.

Use new level of service standards and existing facility mapping to guide the development of new community gardens in underserved areas.

4.3. Expand programming and activities around existing and newly established community gardens.

Create programs and activities that encourage multi-generational interaction and are targeted to specific groups like kids, seniors, and low-income populations.

4.3.1. Work with partners to host food preparation and nutrition classes.

4.3.2. Evaluate the potential to create a food-based incubator space.

Work with other city departments, including Economic Development, to explore the creation of small food-based businesses or farm to table products.



IN PROGRESS: COMMUNITY GARDENS

PARD STAFF ASSIST COMMUNITY MEMBERS WITH LAND SEARCH, LICENSE AGREEMENTS, WATER TAP ACCESS, AND PERMITTING.

Through the Community Gardens Program, Austin residents are not only able to re-engage with their food and enjoy affordable, fresh, local, nutritious and culturally-appropriate food, they are also able to develop a sense of pride and stewardship, benefit from the therapeutic effect of connecting to nature and soil, and foster friendships and cooperation across racial, socioeconomic, and age groups. Throughout Austin there are 67 community gardens, 26 of which are on City of Austin land. Of the 26 public gardens, six are specifically designed for seniors and are located at senior centers and recreation centers. Plots at the existing community gardens are generally made available for a seasonal or yearly fee, with some offering sliding fee scales.



Gus Garcia Rec Center Garden
Source: WRT

4.3.3. Consider the creation of a farm incubator space on PARD property.

The creation of small farming plots would enable new farmers to learn how to farm at a very small scale, eventually moving to their own property.

4.3.4. Work with partners to host gardening classes for the general public.

Use the newly acquired Sustainable Food Center Teaching Garden to teach the basics of gardening to interested community members.

4.3.5. Increase programming opportunities for the community so that community gardens become a larger community space.

4.4. Increase the number of dedicated park staff for the community garden program.

4.4.1. Consider creating a “community gardener” position.

Empower individuals within the community to act as liaisons and help manage the garden and associated programs. Individuals could be trained and provided with a small stipend for working part-time in the garden.

4.4.2. Continue to support a dedicated staff person to work across departments and help to navigate the permit process for those interested in starting a community garden.

4.5. Simplify the process to start a community garden.

4.5.1. Host workshops for organizations or individuals interested in starting a garden.

4.5.2. Proactively identify potential sites for new community gardens and food forests.
Work with the Office of Sustainability to prioritize sites for new gardens and forests based on analysis that considers location, food access, neighborhood organizations and stakeholders, and availability of land.

4.5.3. Provide PARD support for the design and installation of water taps and rainwater harvesting systems as supplemental alternative water sources at all community gardens.



**INTERVALE CENTER:
BURLINGTON,
VERMONT**

This non-profit center operates and manages a 350-acre campus with farmland, composting areas, and food hubs. For over 30 years, this organization has worked to create a sustainable food model that supports the local economy and allows food businesses to thrive. Its farm incubation program helps support new farms by helping emerging farmers overcome a number of challenges including: establishing land and infrastructure, business planning, accessing seasoned growers, and isolation from the larger farming community. Farmers using the incubator are currently cultivating 135 of produce, herbs, and flowers. The program supports about 60 jobs.



Pitchfork Farm Incubator
Source: Intervale Center.



IN PROGRESS: B.A.R.K. PROGRAM

THE B.A.R.K. PROGRAM STARTED AS PART OF THE NATIONAL PARKS SERVICE'S HEALTHY PEOPLE HEALTHY PARKS INITIATIVE AND ALREADY HAS A PRESENCE IN AUSTIN.

*B.A.R.K. teaches dog owners etiquette for visiting parks with dogs. It stands for: **B**ag your pet's waste; **A**lways leash your pet; **R**espect wildlife; and **K**now where you can go. After completing a short program, dogs can become BARK Rangers, serving as a role model for other visitors (human and canine alike).*



City of Austin BARK Ranger
Source: PARD

5. Invest in multi-purpose, unstructured spaces capable of supporting flexible uses.

As Austin continues to grow and densify, the use of its parks is intensifying and diversifying. Accommodating and supporting this increased intensity and diversity of use requires a more flexible approach to park design that allows multi-use spaces in addition to tailored, single-use spaces. Park elements like small plazas or pavilions with electrical/ water hookups, moveable furniture, and multi-purpose athletic fields allow for informal use of space while maintaining a natural, open feel. This light-touch approach enables more users to enjoy parks in a variety of ways.

- 5.1. Create a set of standards for flexible spaces in parks. Provide standards to help incorporate flexible recreation spaces and associated infrastructure within parks.**
- 5.2. When developing plans for parks, include intentionally designed flexible use spaces where appropriate.**

6. Provide dedicated off-leash dog areas in appropriate locations to ensure both dog-owners and non-dog-owners can enjoy parks.

Dog owners and non-dog owners alike are interested in having more clarity on where dogs can and cannot be off-leash. Community members expressed a desire for more dedicated/ fenced spaces for dogs (dog parks & secluded off-leash zones) alongside dedication and enforcement of dog-free and leashed-dog zones. This includes adding fenced-in play areas and larger off-leash areas with dog-friendly trails and dog-runs that are adequately buffered from other park activities to minimize conflict. Providing adequate dog amenities and separation while increasing enforcement of where dogs must be on-leash will enable all users to enjoy parks in a low-stress setting. The overall goal is to expand access for both user groups by setting expectations and minimizing conflicts (e.g., preventing the intermingling of incompatible uses that cause park users stress when in close proximity – such as a dog running off-leash near a playground filled with toddlers or a community garden for seniors).

6.1. Ensure equitable distribution of off-leash areas throughout the city.

- 6.1.1. Negotiate public access, where appropriate, to non-PARD owned or operated off-leash areas.**
This could include areas operated or managed by neighborhood organizations or private entities.
- 6.1.2. Implement off-leash areas in all metro parks and some district parks, where feasible.**
- 6.1.3. Acquire parkland specifically for new off-leash dog areas focusing on areas of the city that lack these facilities.**

6.2. Refrain from placing off-leash areas in existing neighborhood parks with space constraints.

Typically, neighborhood parks are smaller in scale leaving little available space for appropriately sized off-leash dog areas.

6.3. Create a set of standards for off-leash dog areas.

Design considerations should include: complete fencing and a double entry gate, separate designated areas for small and large dogs, water features for dog for cooling, waste management (dog waste bags and trash cans), a drinking fountain for humans that includes a dog bowl component, shade (whether it be trees or a shade cover), seating, and the ability to rotate high-intensity use zones to reduce soil compaction and devegetation. As part of this process, evaluate whether it would be beneficial to establish a new dog-specific park type (i.e., bark park), which would provide a fenced-in social gathering spot with benches, a water station and an agility course where dogs can safely exercise and play with their owners and care-takers.

6.4. Provide dedicated, well-signed off-leash dog trails in large parks where these trails are buffered from other densely used park areas.

The dog-owner focus group indicated that off-leash trails were equally if not more valuable than fenced-in play areas because dogs tend to be more relaxed and social with one another when they can move freely. Off-leash dog trails also offer dog owners the opportunity to enjoy a linear experience moving through a natural area while getting their dog some engaging exercise.

- 6.4.1. Place clear signage on both off-leash dog trails and trails where dogs are required to be on-leash.**

Off-leash dog areas can be a valuable asset to a park system. Dog parks can help build community by bringing dog owners and dog lovers together, and these areas can also help activate parks especially at off-hours since dogs are often walked earlier in the morning and later in the evening than when other park goers may be present, even in bad weather.

**THE TRUST FOR
PUBLIC LAND**
2019

“The capacity to enjoy the parks and natural areas, in an unprogrammed setting, is what enables many people’s enjoyment and use of Austin parks. No need to clutter or over-program.”

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

2018

6.5. Increase educational efforts to encourage a safe and enjoyable environment in off-leash areas.

The best off-leash dog areas have an active friends group that can help enforce behavior and conduct clean-ups and improvement projects.

6.5.1. Increase the reach of the existing Austin B.A.R.K. ranger program.

6.5.2. Consider having park rangers write warnings to reduce off-leash dogs in leashed areas.

7. Protect and manage natural areas to intentionally balance recreational use with environmental protection.

As park use intensifies, it is increasingly important that PARD develop an approach to support recreational use that does not threaten or degrade natural resources and supports the health and longevity of these natural areas.

7.1. Create and implement land and forest management plans.

These management plans should include vegetation and tree management guidelines with detailed planting, pruning, forest thinning, mowing, design, access, and restoration plans as well as description of risks and protocols. Ensure adequate funding for maintenance of these elements beyond basic trash pickup and mowing.

7.2. Manage trail access and limit active recreation that negatively impacts natural areas.

Adopt trail standards and plan for maintenance of established natural spaces. Broaden tree maintenance activities to improve safety surrounding trails where trees are not currently maintained. Investigate a forestry crew for natural areas. Close unauthorized trails and work to improve trailheads. Plan for greenbelts as part of the active transportation systems, while balancing environmental impacts.

7.3. Actively manage natural areas to understand and increase ecosystem services.

7.3.1. Support implementation of Austin’s Urban Forest Plan and prioritize conducting a tree inventory that informs forest management and tree planting considerations.

- 7.3.2. Conduct a rigorous study of the environmental carrying capacity of parks and facilities and utilize information to make decisions about appropriate environmental / user trade-offs.
- 7.3.3. Inventory and actively manage natural spaces to control invasive species intrusion, increase habitat for pollinators, and support biodiversity when not in conflict with passive recreation.
- 7.3.4. Continue to explore value of prescribed fire as natural area management technique.
- 7.3.5. Manage natural areas to reduce wildfire concerns as provided in citywide wildfire audit.
- 7.3.6. Consider ways to open limited public access to PARD's natural areas and undeveloped parks for an immersive nature experience.
Prior to opening access, PARD should conduct a tree risk assessment to ensure new access paths are sustainable. Methods could include providing nature trails and signage, clearing some brush and canopy, and limited on-going trail and tree maintenance.

7.4. Continue to prioritize acquisition of parkland for natural areas, including creek buffers for greenbelt extensions.

Land acquisition should have a natural focus of larger green spaces that can be used for nature appreciation and connectivity.

7.5. Increase public access easements within non-PARD conservation areas and natural lands.

Work with landowners to negotiate limited public access, where feasible. Prioritize areas that provide additional connectivity to existing trails, increase overall access to open space, or provide views of or access to natural waterways.

7.6. Explore where “nature play” areas could be added to PARD parkland.

Nature play areas have the potential to introduce low-impact, engaging playscapes that help children discover and learn about nature while they play.



NATURAL EXPERIENCES	UNSTRUCTURED SPACES	GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE	LINEAR PARKS & TRAILS	PROXIMITY & ACCESS	URBAN SPACES	PARKS & ARTS/CULTURE	EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES	INCLUSIVITY	CLEANLINESS & SAFETY
✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT THEMES



Source: PARD

B.

EXPAND & IMPROVE PARK ACCESS FOR ALL



Providing equitable access to parkland for all residents is a priority for PARD. Through the Long Range Plan process some community members commented on the difficulty of accessing and navigating the park system. There are multiple tools that can be used to improve park access including expanded trail connections, improved wayfinding, and greater sensitivity to ADA standards.



CITY OF AUSTIN / UT AUSTIN: UPROOTED GENTRIFICATION DISPLACEMENT STUDY.

In 2018, the City of Austin commissioned a study led by the University of Texas: "Uprooted: Residential Displacement in Austin's Gentrifying Neighborhoods and What Can Be Done About It," to establish a baseline understanding of residential displacement risk. The study includes a framework for 1) identifying and prioritizing gentrifying neighborhoods where residents are at the highest risk of displacement and 2) matching strategies to needs of vulnerable residents in these neighborhoods.



Source: PARD

1. Prior to any significant master plan or development, work with partner organizations and current and long-time residents to ensure community involvement in the process.

Many areas of the city that have unmet park needs are also at risk of gentrification and displacement as the city continues to grow. In order to ensure park investments that improve local quality of life do not trigger or accelerate displacement, it is necessary to proactively plan to mitigate and protect against displacement.

1.1. Review current trends and risk for displacement for relevant area.

When beginning a master planning process for an individual park, review relevant trend data and analysis related to gentrification and displacement risk within the immediate surrounding areas and include in the community discussion. Sources could include research conducted by UT Austin, the city, or other agencies.

1.2. Establish engagement partnerships.

Early in the planning process identify potential local community organization partners who can help to meaningfully engage current and long-time residents in the park master planning process.

1.3. Ensure equity throughout the process.

Engage the City of Austin Equity Office in developing a set of park master plan goals and use the process and questions laid out in the draft Equity Assessment Tool to guide the planning process. The Equity Office developed this tool to help City departments systematically integrate "purposeful consideration to ensure budget and planning decisions reduce disparities, promote service level equity, and improve community engagement."

1.4. Consult the LRP-identified priority needs for facilities and programs.

Priority needs should be assessed in collaboration with the identified engagement partners and the Equity Office to inform potential enhancements and what displacement risks might be associated with those activities.

2. Invest in the acquisition of new parkland that can make parks a part of everyday life in existing and future underserved areas.

There is a strong desire for parks to be a part of everyday life – this is seen as a characteristic Austin experience. In order to extend this experience to all residents, PARD should introduce and develop a collection of smaller pocket and “button” parks that can be woven into existing urban areas with insufficient access to parks. Additionally, PARD will use the Imagine Austin Growth Centers and Corridors along with the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan (ASMP) priority networks to coordinate new parkland acquisitions with where the city is focusing future transportation investments that will help improve, increase, and expand access to future parkland.

2.1. Create additional pocket and button parks to extend additional parkland into dense areas of the city.

Pocket parks are less than two acres in size and typically serve residents in more urban, denser neighborhoods in the city. Button parks are a new park type in Austin and can be less than one acre, similar to a school park but without the limited hours of a school park. Both park types help to provide easy, walkable access to residents in park deficient areas. They should be integrated into surrounding retail, restaurants, employment, and residential uses to create a strong sense of place and attractive, vibrant greenspace within neighborhoods.

2.2. Create additional neighborhood parks in areas that are underserved.

2.3. Acquire land for larger greenbelt parks in less-developed parts of the city where substantial growth and development is expected.

These parks can provide access to natural areas and function to enhance water quality by protecting and restoring riparian health within waterway setbacks. Introduction of recreational uses should be planned carefully to limit any negative environmental impacts.

2.4. Acquire land to provide better walking and biking connectivity between parks.

Develop linear parks and urban trails in partnership with other departments. Trails should be lined with shade trees where feasible.

“I would like to see a balance of facilities in all parts of Austin, in other words, there is a concentration of wonderful park amenities central west but not central east”

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

2018

3. Increase the number of entrances to existing parks in order to expand the number of residents within walking distance of a park.

Residents are often within a quarter mile of a park based on straight line measurement, but must go substantially further to reach the park either because there are limited entrances or limited sidewalks leading to the park.

3.1. Assess opportunities for additional entrances and access points using the parkland deficiency mapping.

Using the parkland deficiency map, analyze opportunities to provide additional points of access that may allow additional residents to walk to a local park.

3.2. Proactively plan entrances and access points for new parks to ensure the greatest number of residents are within walking distance.

3.3. Prioritize new access or entry points near existing mobility networks, including sidewalks, bike routes, urban trails, and transit.

3.3.1. Look for opportunities to strengthen Safe Routes to Schools pathways near parks.

In some instances, children do not have a safe way to cross through a park. Ensure access plans consider the location of these routes when planning new entrances.

3.3.2. Establish a new amenity or feature class for “Trailhead” to allow for easier identification and access by the community.

This would help prioritize investments in smaller parks that also serve as trailheads. Trail access will enable these smaller “gateway” parks to attract and serve a broader population beyond residents of the adjacent neighborhood.

3.3.3. Increase tree-lined shade cover for transit stops in and near parks.

3.4. Expand and standardize entrances, while discouraging unofficial entrances to reduce unstable and unmaintained trails.

This will improve visitor experience and reduce instances of park users getting lost.

“I would like more well maintained and marked/ mapped... trails. South Austin has an amazing trail network that is almost impossible to navigate because there are no signs.”

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

2018

4. Increase multi-use and nature trails within the existing PARD park system and continue to acquire land for linear parks and greenbelts that can accommodate larger trail systems.

People are more interested in parks that allow them to move (walk/run/bike) as opposed to staying in one place. Increasing trails within the existing park system will enable Austinites to enjoy the park system as they move through it.

4.1. Look for opportunities to acquire properties for greenbelt, trail, and linear park expansion.

Prioritize areas that fill in the gaps in existing networks of trails and greenbelts and are adjacent to water bodies.

4.1.1. Work with partners and community organizations to acquire ownership or easements from willing sellers for land adjacent to creeks and waterways.

4.1.2. Complete trail networks.

Partner with the Public Works Department Urban Trails Program to implement the Urban Trails Master Plan where identified trails are located within or adjacent to parkland. Assess opportunities to acquire new land or easements through private property to complete existing trail networks and loops in the city and adjacent municipalities.



SUPPORTING TRAILS: SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

SAN ANTONIO FUNDED THE GROWTH OF THEIR TRAIL NETWORK THROUGH A SERIES OF SPECIFIC SALES TAX AMOUNTS, CURRENTLY 1/8TH OF A CENT, FIRST APPROVED BY VOTERS IN 2000.

San Antonio now boasts 65 miles of multi-use trails, called the Howard W. Peak trail system. The city's trails are supported by a growing Trail Watch volunteer program, which builds community awareness and engagement with the park and trail system and supports better maintenance and growth of the trail system.



Leon Greenway Trail, San Antonio, TX
Source: SA2020

— DISC GOLF

THERE WAS
STRONG
COMMUNITY
SUPPORT FOR
MORE DISC GOLF
FACILITIES.



5. Support the efforts of the *Austin Strategic Mobility Plan*, City departments, and partners in advancing the mobility network beyond the PARD park system.

There is a need for more high-quality sidewalks, urban trails, and bicycle infrastructure that allow people to get to and between different parks without a car. Trails also improve access by making it faster, easier, and more pleasant for residents to visit parks that would otherwise be too far away.

5.1. Improve pedestrian access to parkland by advocating for safe crossings within a 1/4 mile walkshed of all PARD parks, as described in ASMP Action 139.

5.2. Improve integration with transit and bikeshare networks to expand parkland access.

5.2.1. Work with Capital Metro to evaluate the potential to increase and expand transit stops near parks and facilities.

5.2.2. Increase and expand bikeshare locations near trails and greenbelts.

5.2.3. Consider expanding PARD's Senior Transportation service by adding routes, drivers, and vehicles.

5.3. Work with Austin Transportation, Public Works, Corridor Program Office, and other partners to improve mobility around and between parks and nearby activity areas.

5.3.1. Work with partners to implement the Sidewalk Plan/ADA Transition Plan for areas of need adjacent to parks.

5.3.2. Work with partners to implement all ages and abilities bicycle infrastructure near parks. Comfortable on- and off-street bike infrastructure can improve access to parks and facilities.

5.4. Explore regulations and infrastructure enhancements for new forms of mobility near parks and along trails.

Evaluate the need for rules and physical changes for new forms of mobility, such as motorized scooters, to ensure safer interactions between users and to reduce conflicts between recreation and transportation needs.

6. Achieve a more even distribution of facilities that have a strong citywide interest.

Some facilities (e.g., cultural centers, tennis courts, disc golf courses, bocce courts) have a notably imbalanced distribution despite a consistent interest across all parts of the city.

- 6.1. Evaluate the need for different facilities based on geographic distribution, age distribution, and current and future population (using guidance from the National Recreation and Park Association) on a regular basis.**
- 6.2. Evaluate the equitable distribution and quantity of restrooms throughout the park system and determine if access and sustainability can be increased through technology and innovation.**

7. Aspire to provide universal access.

Parks should be accessible, to the extent possible, to everyone regardless of age, ability, or language. Strive to create equal access for all by reducing barriers to use.

7.1. Seek opportunities to go beyond minimum ADA requirements and Texas Accessibility Standards to achieve broader access for all residents.

When budget and site constraints allow, find opportunities to exceed minimum standards through universal design.

7.2. Add playscapes in existing under-served areas, ensure there is at least one playground with all-abilities components in each combined planning area, and consider a destination all-abilities playscape.

Inclusive play should be available to all residents in Austin. Development of new playscapes should focus on design that is inclusive for all. Consider a citywide playscape destination (e.g., Play for All Park, Round Rock). Include nature-based elements that can directly benefit children with sensory integration disorder, cognitive impairments, or other adaptive needs.

7.3. Implement PARD's ADA Transition plan.

- 7.3.1. Improve access to all community recreation centers for mobility impaired patrons through the installation of ADA compliant sidewalks and automated facility entrance and exit doors.**



ADAPTIVE PLAY

SALEM, OREGON'S LET'S ALL PLAY PLACE IS AN ADAPTIVE PLAYGROUND THAT FOLLOWS UNIVERSAL DESIGN AND ALL-ABILITIES PLAY PRINCIPLES.

The structures and equipment are designed to be usable by all people regardless of ability. It features an accessible slide, sensory elements, specialized swings, geoball climber, collaborative water play, smooth and grass areas (no wood chips), and a serpentine track that also functions as an accessible circuit.



Let's All Play Place, Salem, OR
Source: Harper's Playground

7.3.2. Ensure trails and associated amenities are ADA-accessible, to the greatest extent possible.

7.3.3. Create a guide to ADA-accessible trails, parks, and facilities that is available both online and in print.

7.4. Provide culturally appropriate signage in parks.

Work with communities to determine where multi-lingual signage or additional interpretive signage is needed.

7.5. Increase access to restrooms that are gender neutral, and compliant with ADA regulations and Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS).

Identify opportunities to adapt existing and develop new restrooms that provide single stall, gender neutral, ADA/TAS compliant restrooms that are accessible and accommodate family use. Explore opportunities to incorporate adult-sized tables to accommodate adults with disabilities who require assistance from a caretaker.

8. Improve signage and wayfinding markers at entrances and along trails to help park users navigate with confidence.

8.1. Create and implement a signage and wayfinding plan.

This plan should prioritize trailheads and should include standards for main entrance signage, wayfinding, and identification signage within the park and along trails, and a list of preferred materials. PARD's signage



SIGNAGE: NYC PARKS, LANGUAGE ACCESS

NEW YORK CITY'S DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION CURRENTLY OFFERS TRANSLATED SIGNAGE IN MULTIPLE LANGUAGE ACROSS ALL CITY'S PARKS.

In the city's 2018 Language Access Plan, the main goals include expanding the services available to phone interpretation services and language identification posters, and to providing all signs in 11 languages that are targeted to each area's population.



NYC Park Signage in multiple languages
Source: Pentagram

and wayfinding guidelines should be developed collaboratively with the PWD Urban Trails and ATD Bicycle Program to ensure consistency with urban trails and bicycle routes beyond PARD land. The plan should include schedules for implementation and maintenance of new signage as well as removal of out-of-date signs.

8.2. Incorporate signage and wayfinding into park plans.

When developing master plans for parks, ensure that signage meets standards, includes key wayfinding elements, and is culturally appropriate. Increase interpretive signage about unique features on parkland.

9. Improve web-based information describing the park system to help people quickly find amenities and experiences they are seeking.

Redesign the PARD website so that it is a user-friendly, community-facing, streamlined web interface that provides key information for residents.

10. Work with Austin Transportation to evaluate the need and appropriate fee structure for private automobile parking areas.

10.1. Create parking standards for parks and facilities.

Standards should include maximum number of parking spots, minimum number of bicycle/scooter racks and parking, appropriate use, and potential fee structure. Consider reducing private automobile parking standards for facilities that are well served by existing alternative mobility networks.

10.1.1. Consider adding carshare-only parking spots.

10.1.2. Evaluate methods to reduce inappropriate parking.

In denser areas of the city, free parking may be used inappropriately by non-park users if it is available and free.

10.2. Explore ways to both reduce private automobile trips to parks and reduce parking demand.

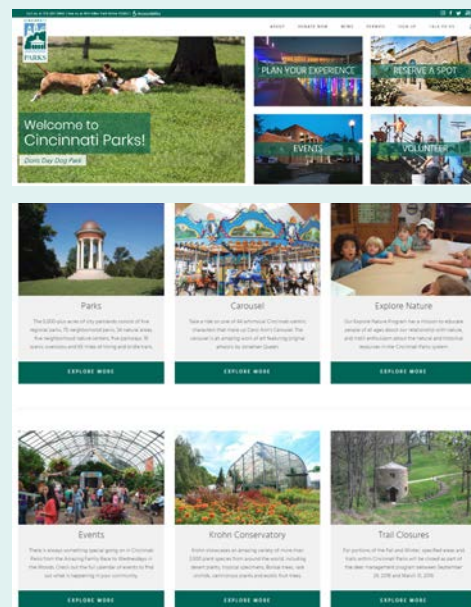
Methods could include reduced entry fees or discounted transit fares and passes for visitors who choose to take sustainable modes to parks and facilities.



WEBSITE COMMUNICATIONS

CINCINNATI'S PARK AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT REDESIGNED ITS WEBSITE IN 2018 TO STREAMLINE CONTENT AND CREATE AN EASY-TO-NAVIGATE LAYOUT.

Keeping the user in mind, the new website includes a modern, responsive web design that provides an interactive experience for users as well as improved organization. A key feature is the calendar of events page, which allows the user to filter based on preferences for day, time, or venue.



Cincinnati Parks Website
Source: cincinnati.parks.com



NATURAL EXPERIENCES	
UNSTRUCTURED SPACES	
GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE	
LINEAR PARKS & TRAILS	
PROXIMITY & ACCESS	✓
URBAN SPACES	✓
PARKS & ARTS/CULTURE	✓
EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES	✓
INCLUSIVITY	✓
CLEANLINESS & SAFETY	✓

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT THEMES



Source: PARD

C. ACTIVATE & ENHANCE URBAN PUBLIC SPACES



Urban public spaces require a different approach and have historically been overlooked and underestimated in terms of their ability to improve quality of life in denser urban areas. As PARD looks to expand park access and reach developed areas, activating smaller urban public spaces will become an increasingly crucial strategy to extend the benefits of parks to more people. To be successful, this will require a flexible, partnership-centric approach with a blend of PARD programming on non-PARD-owned spaces, and partner programming and maintenance at PARD parkland.

“[Republic Square] is a gem. Please keep it vibrant with quality care and community events.”

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK 2018

1. Build on the Downtown Austin Alliance’s Downtown Austin Vision to holistically elevate the quality of the urban public realm.

This includes streetscapes, parklets, green infrastructure, urban trails, downtown park programming, and events and installations that build community and identity around underutilized spaces that have the potential to become pocket parks, trails, and button parks. This could also include adding more educational and informational signage that calls attention to features and locations that have natural, cultural, or historical significance.

1.1. Implement the Downtown Austin Vision (from the Downtown Austin Alliance).

The vision prioritizes creating new parks, places, and connections, including the completion of the urban greenbelt and burying Interstate Highway 35.

1.1.1. Track and monitor implementation of the Brush Square Master Plan.

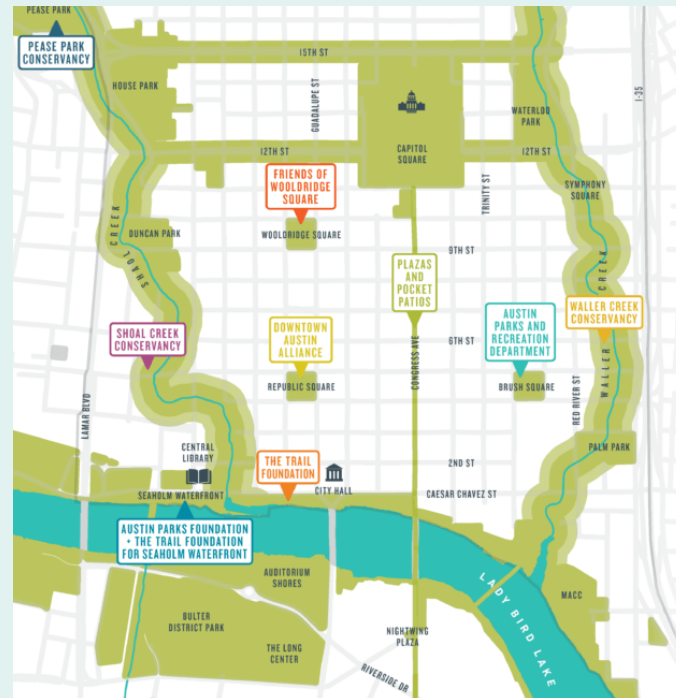
1.1.2. Track and monitor implementation of the Wooldridge Square Preliminary Plan.



IN-PROGRESS: AUSTIN’S URBAN GREENBELT

THE DOWNTOWN AUSTIN VISION, CREATED BY THE DOWNTOWN AUSTIN ALLIANCE AND ITS PARTNERS, ENVISIONS A CONNECTED AND INTEGRATED GREENBELT OF PARKS AND PLACES ENCIRCLING DOWNTOWN.

Eventually the network will include pedestrian and bicycle connections linking Waller Creek, Shoal Creek, Lady Bird Lake, and the Ann and Roy Butler Hike-and-Bike Trail. The Long Range Plan supports the completion of this loop.



Austin’s Urban Greenbelt
Source: Downtown Austin Alliance

1.2. Reduce barriers to hosting seasonal / special events on underutilized land downtown.

Work with downtown organizations and city departments to schedule and host a series of seasonal or special events on underutilized land. This could include moving beer gardens, farmers' markets, or night markets.

1.3. Continue to reference the Downtown Parks and Open Space Master Plan in the 2010 Downtown Austin Plan.

While many recommendations have been implemented, the document provides valuable strategies for enhancing Austin's downtown parks and open spaces.

2. Invest in more lighting and increased staff and volunteer presence, especially along trails and pathways, to ensure parks feel safe after dark.

2.1. Incorporate Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles in all park plans.

CPTED is a set of best practices that leverage design to reduce crime and improve the perception of safety by maximizing visual and physical access in and out of a space and improving lighting among other strategies.

2.2. Use the Park Score Cards to assess parks in need of safety improvements.

2.3. Assess trails for safety concerns and create a plan to address any issues.

Use data collected through Park Rangers' directed patrols to parks with concerns to find areas of most need.

2.4. Increase Park Rangers to add a more visible presence in parks and especially along trails and pathways.

2.5. Expand the structure for a park ambassador program.

Park ambassadors can not only improve perceptions of safety in parks, but also provide users with information and address any potential concerns. A park ambassador program could be paired or partnered with Workforce First to provide additional sources of employment for individuals experiencing homelessness. Work with partners to investigate opportunities for Park Rangers to co-lead and grow the existing park ambassador program



ACTIVATING URBAN SPACES

PARKS ON TAP IS A PROGRAM THAT BRINGS A BEER GARDEN TO VARIOUS PARKS IN PHILADELPHIA THROUGHOUT THE SUMMER SEASON.

Featuring craft beer, cocktails, and food, Parks on Tap encourages people to discover, enjoy, and support open park space. Since its 2016 launch, the program has generated enough revenue to support improvements, maintenance, and programs in the city's parks. The events are often paired with "friends-of" fundraisers and outreach events.



Parks on Tap, 2018
Source: WRT



FARMERS' MARKETS

CLARK PARK FARMERS' MARKET, PHILADELPHIA PA.

Established in one of West Philadelphia's main parks in 1998, the Clark Park Farmers' Market is a neighborhood favorite that operates year-round through support from Philadelphia Parks and Recreation, Friends of Clark Park, and the University of the Sciences. Vendors at this market accept WIC and Senior FMNP vouchers as well as ACCESS/food stamps card. For every \$5 that customers spend using food stamp benefits, they receive a \$2 Philly Food Bucks coupon that can go towards fruit and vegetables.



Clark Park Farmers' Market
Source: University City District.

so there is a coordinated response to concerns, whereby park ambassadors serve as an extension of PARD's safety and safety education staff.

2.6. Ensure all updated lighting is dark sky friendly and meets International standards.

Appropriate lighting will (1) increase visibility by reducing glare and shadows; (2) help preserve the experience of seeing stars, and other natural spectacles like the Milky Way, planets and comets in Austin; and (3) minimize disruption of ecosystem functions that rely on predictable day-night cycles and circadian rhythm.

3. Support more dense, flexible, and diverse programs and amenities (e.g., temporary seating or play equipment) in urban public spaces within and beyond PARD parkland.

3.1. Find opportunities to reduce barriers to hosting programs in urban spaces.

Create a simplified way to offer programming in partnership with community groups and partner organizations.

3.2. Work with partners to invest in the necessary infrastructure to host programs in the urban core.

Water and electricity are often key infrastructure elements that are needed to support flexible use of spaces, as is multi-modal access that can efficiently and safely transport large crowds arriving and departing at the same time.

4. Continuously monitor and provide a clear picture of cost and revenue information to the community, including community and economic impacts associated with large events in urban parks.

4.1. Create a fact sheet, available digitally and in print, that provides answers to commonly asked questions.

Improve transparency about large events that happen on publicly-owned land by creating a user-friendly fact

sheet available on PARD's website and in print. Include answers to frequently asked questions and a summary of how these large events benefit the park system and the city as a whole by increasing operation revenue, increasing tourism dollars, providing opportunities for community engagement, and increasing visibility and awareness of park facilities.

- 4.2. Continually evaluate the public benefit of events held in parks and measure social and economic impacts, and share findings with the community.**

5. Increase access to healthy and fresh foods through parks.

- 5.1. Work with partners to reduce barriers to farmers' markets locating and operating on city-owned land.**

It is currently very difficult to navigate the permit process to locate a market located at a PARD facility. This process should be streamlined and expedited.

- 5.2. Support community organizations and partners interested in hosting farmers' markets.**

According to the Farmers' Market Coalition, Texas is 50th in the nation in the number of farmers' markets per capita. There are barriers to organizing farmers' markets on public or private land and it can be difficult to get a farmers' market up and running.

- 5.2.1. Partner with the regional Farmers' Market Coalition to explore opportunities for markets on parkland and potential for bringing in community gardens.**

Utilize metrics from the Office of Sustainability's pilot program with the Texas Center for Local Food to communicate the value and impact of farmers' markets on the local economy and communities.

- 5.2.2. Host farmers' market workshops for interested organizations where PARD and partners provide key information.**

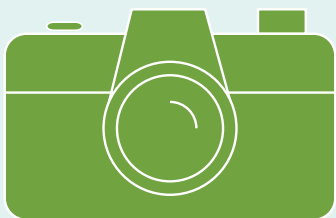
Information could include required staff capacity, recommended partnerships, and available resources.



GARDEN PARTNERSHIPS

PORTLAND HAS 57 COMMUNITY GARDENS THROUGHOUT THE CITY THAT ARE SUPPORTED BY THE PORTLAND PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT.

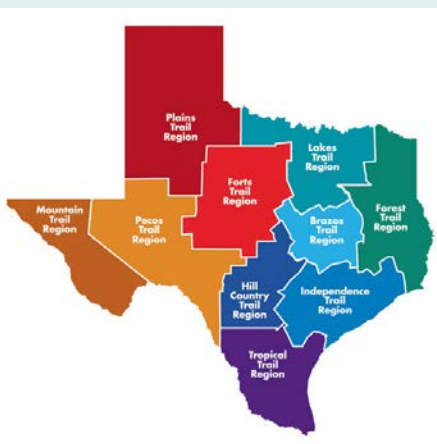
Portland has the most community garden plots per resident among the 100 largest U.S. cities. Aside from the sheer number, one of the most notable facts about Portland's community gardens is that they are also supported by a thriving nonprofit, the Friends of Portland Community Gardens, which has been in existence for over 30 years. A strong partnership between one umbrella nonprofit and the city in terms of community gardens is certainly part of what makes the city garden program so successful. Similar public-private partnerships for community gardens exist in Seattle, Philadelphia, Boston, New York City, and San Francisco.



HERITAGE TOURISM

HERITAGE TOURISM IN TEXAS IS A \$7.3 BILLION DOLLAR INDUSTRY AND ACCOUNTS FOR MORE THAN 10.5 PERCENT OF ALL TRAVEL IN THE STATE.

The Heritage Tourism Program in Texas promotes travel to experience the places, artifacts and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present. The Texas Heritage Trails, a component of the program, is a network of 10 regional, non-profit organizations working across the state to develop sites and increase awareness.



Texas Heritage Trails
Source: Texas Historical Commission

5.3. Build on the success of the City of Austin’s “Fresh for Less” program.

Fresh for Less is a public-private partnership with the Sustainable Food Center, Farmshare Austin, and GAVA (Go Austin!/Vamos Austin!) that offers fresh, affordable, convenient, and nutritious food through farm stands, mobile markets, and healthy corner stores. Consider PARD facilities that could potentially host the program based on existing food access data from the city.

5.4. Create a comprehensive guide for vending on PARD-owned property to increase transparency around regulations and guidelines for vending.

5.4.1. Work with the Economic Development Department to develop (or enhance) fee structure for vending at or near parks.

5.4.2. Work with Small and Minority Owned Business Resources to support WMBE businesses for providing education and priority access on vending near parks.

6. Expand PARD’s Historic Preservation and Heritage Tourism Program to protect, restore, and promote the cultural and historic resources of the park system.

PARD benefits from a new stream of funding, hotel occupancy tax revenue, for historic resources that attract tourists. PARD’s historic resources and historic parks play a major role in the heritage tourism infrastructure of Austin.

6.1. Maintain and update an inventory of PARD’s historic and cultural resources.

PARD is the steward of more than 30 City of Austin historic landmarks, 10 State Antiquities Landmarks, and more than 60 resources that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

6.2. Provide online access to information about historic resources, including historic designations and archives.

- 6.3. Continue investing in the restoration of historic sites through funding from the City of Austin’s Historic Preservation Fund.
- 6.4. Develop marketing materials and a web presence for PARD historic sites; explore opportunities to provide interpretive materials, on-site signage, and audio or print-based storytelling.
- 6.5. Raise awareness about the importance of protecting archaeological resources.
- 6.6. Provide training and educational resources to staff and PARD partners on historic preservation best practices.
- 6.7. Implement the Historic Cemeteries Master Plan.



Oakwood Cemetery
Source: PARD



NATURAL EXPERIENCES	UNSTRUCTURED SPACES	GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE	LINEAR PARKS & TRAILS	PROXIMITY & ACCESS	URBAN SPACES	PARKS & ARTS/CULTURE	EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES	INCLUSIVITY	CLEANLINESS & SAFETY
✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT THEMES



Source: PARD

D. ALIGN PROGRAMS WITH COMMUNITY INTEREST



While there is a high demand for more programs at parks, there is also a strong interest in Austin for natural experiences and unprogrammed spaces and activities. As the needs and interests of community members change, program offerings should be evaluated and adjusted as needed to reflect the most relevant programs.

“Educate our youth. It is cost effective and fun. There are many activities youth can do outside and we need them out in nature as much as possible. It is healthy and has been shown to be calming and decreases anxiety.”

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

2018

1. Provide more nature-based programs.

“Nature Deficit Disorder,” a term coined by Author Richard Louv, highlights how the densification of cities and our tendency to spend more time indoors makes us feel alienated from nature and can potentially lead to negative behavioral outcomes. Providing more access to nature and nature-based programming can help restore our connection to nature and improve physical and mental health.

1.1. Work with partners, including recreation centers and summer camps, to increase nature programming throughout the city.

1.2. Add high-quality educational signage to natural areas.

Clear interpretive signage can help increase awareness and appreciation of nature without additional staff resources. This could include signage in more urban areas of the city and in downtown parks.

1.3. Consider using public art as a way to interpret natural areas and features.

Public art can be both educational and beautiful. It can help bring attention to key natural resources while enhancing aesthetics of the place.

1.4. Add programming to natural spaces in a guided way to increase peoples’ ability to comfortably explore on their own.

1.5. Consider the feasibility of creating a second nature center or the potential for rotating satellite /temporary exhibits and programs to bring quality nature programming to a larger slice of the community.

Current nature center programming easily has waitlist over 1,000 people each summer. Investigate ways to serve waitlist and needs of Austinites for quality nature programming that is not just through partners but relies on expertise and resources within PARD. For example, exhibits or s could take place within existing facilities or on parkland in urban and heavily used parks.

1.6. Create more nature-based youth education and summer camps.

1.6.1. Build on the resources developed from the Cities Connecting Children to Nature Initiative.



CONNECTING WITH NATURE

MINNEAPOLIS'S PARK AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT HOSTS A VARIETY OF NATURE EDUCATION PROGRAMS DESIGNED SPECIFICALLY FOR CHILDREN, HELD AT RECREATION CENTERS THROUGHOUT THE CITY.

Programs are separated out by age, from preschoolers to those age 6 – 12 to children of all ages and their parents/guardians. Minneapolis's Parks and Recreation Department also offers nature-based adult and family programs that encourage families to get out and enjoy nature together. While most of the programs are fee-based, there are scholarships available, and some are free such as the no-registration, monthly 'Come Out and Play' family program.



Nature Play Event – Minneapolis
Source: Free Forest School

1.6.2. Formalize a “Junior Park Ranger” program.

1.6.3. Explore opportunities to expand the successful, award winning Park Ranger Cadet program to more than one school.

1.7. Expand Park Ranger nature stewardship training to better connect residents of all ages to nature.

Park Rangers currently lead nature stewardship programs that teach skills like plant and animal identification, navigation skills, and key environmental ethics that focus on “Leave No Trace” principles. Increase the frequency and diversity of these programs and expand them beyond the parks in the Urban Core.

1.8. Incorporate natural areas (e.g., native plant gardens, tree groves, etc.) in all PARD facilities, where feasible.

2. Increase adult and senior programming across multiple categories – active recreation, nature-based, and arts and culture.

Today's older adults are more active than they were in the past and the programming offered by PARD should respond to that trend by providing more diverse and inclusive offerings.

“Austin has an abundance of spaces for children, youth, and families in comparison to quality spaces and activities for the growing senior population. Please keep in mind the needs of seniors for non-crowded or designated walking, swimming, and social activities”

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

2018

“If there are to be arts programs, they should pertain to the local neighborhood culture and not be brought in from outside.”

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

2018

- 2.1. Consider changing the nomenclature for “Senior Centers” to “Active Adult Centers.”**
- 2.2. Enhance programming at existing Senior Centers.**

Expand program offerings at Senior Centers to cater to the needs of more active, older adults.

 - 2.2.1. Help to organize walking groups for adults.**
 - 2.2.2. Develop nature-based programming for adults.**

This could include birding groups, gardening, horticulture, stewardship programs, and park ambassador roles.
- 2.3. Provide more intergenerational programs.**
- 2.4. Expand Bringing Seniors Together event series through partnerships and/or increased funding.**
- 2.5. Grow the Austin Senior Games event over the next decade.**
- 2.6. Establish senior swim times and universal access pools to expand senior access to swimming and water fitness.**

Consider retrofitting an East Austin pool (e.g., Parque Zaragoza Pool) or building a universal access pool on the existing SAC grounds (e.g., Conley-Guerrero SAC).

3. Increase the number, diversity, and equitable distribution of arts and culture programs being offered through PARD.

- 3.1. Explore the feasibility of partnering to establish new cultural/arts/community centers in areas that fall substantially below the citywide average (North, Southeast, Southwest, and West).**
- 3.2. Expand Arts-Based Education.**
- 3.3. Partner to pilot a new type of indoor cultural facility, a Community Creativity Center (CCC), which would provide community-driven, multi-disciplinary arts spaces.**

These new community-driven creative spaces will, through extensive community engagement, be designed to meet the needs of artists and audiences in different communities across the city while retaining the flexibility

to accommodate changing neighborhood dynamics. They will function as “one-stop” arts hubs, providing information to artists and residents about grants, technical assistance and city resources. CCCs can be a component of any type of public building that serves a public assembly or public service purpose; recreation centers, libraries, one-stop centers, athletic centers, public housing, schools, and health centers are just a few examples of facilities that could include a CCC with just the addition or retrofit of relatively small amounts of usable space. CCC spaces may include but are not limited to studios, exhibition spaces, multi-purpose performance and event spaces, as well as administrative support spaces. PARD will work with the Economic Development Department to ensure the CCC concept is linked to the Creative Space Bond.

3.4. Increase public art installations.

Public art is a tool for placemaking that can activate and enliven spaces. Explore opportunities to have artists work with community members to site new community-centric public art installations throughout PARD parkland and work with the Art in Public Places program to look for new opportunities in parks.

3.5. Complete necessary improvements and renovations to existing cultural, arts, recreation, and community centers to support additional programming.

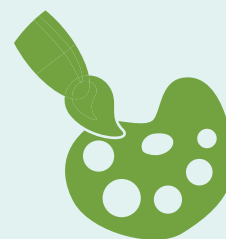
4. Explore partnership strategies to increase low-income access to PARD programming.

The Community Recreation Division operates 20 community recreation centers with diverse programming and special events across the city. Several partnerships are focused on improving public health and access to free fitness and nutrition programming.

4.1. Provide a guide highlighting the range of programs available to residents at reduced or no-cost.

4.2. Review opportunities to expand low- or no-cost programming in areas that may be lacking based on local community need, interest, grant opportunities, and funding availability.

4.3. Provide a web-based asset map of PARD programs and events on the Age Friendly Austin website.



IN PROGRESS: PUBLIC ART IN PARKS

AUSTIN’S ART IN PUBLIC PLACES (AIPP) PROGRAM WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1985 AND INVITES LOCALLY AND NATIONALLY KNOWN ARTISTS TO HELP REPRESENT THE LOCAL VALUES AND CULTURAL HISTORY OF AUSTIN THROUGH ART.

The program is funded through a 2% set aside for capital improvement projects and includes locations such as the airport, convention center, libraries, parks and recreation centers, police stations, and along streets. An Art in Parks walking tour can be developed through a partnership with AIPP and shared on PARD’s website and through educational materials. The AIPP percent-for-art ordinance will continue to bring new artworks to Austin’s parks, providing more opportunities for the community to experience art in Austin’s parks and community centers.

“I enjoy musical and theatrical performances in the parks but in recent years the crowds at events such as the Zilker Hillside Theater and Blues on the Green have made it too difficult to attend these events, especially with children. I would enjoy smaller scale events at neighborhood parks”

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

2018

— KEEPING UP WITH DEMAND

857,000+
PEOPLE USED
COMMUNITY
RECREATION
CENTERS

FY 2018 PARD
Annual Report

5. Leverage “pop-up” programming and temporary uses to activate public spaces and expand access to programs typically held in recreation and cultural centers.

Temporary or pop-up uses can add value to and activate underutilized public spaces, without requiring investment in new facilities. PARD should work with willing partners to find opportunities to create parklets or beer gardens, host special or seasonal events, partner to create book or tool libraries, or bring exercise or nature-based programming to public spaces throughout the city.

5.1. Increase support and staffing for PARD’s Community and Engagement Division to help plan and implement increased programming and improve equity across the park system.

5.2. Work within the partnership structure to explore opportunities for increased programs in unconventional or underutilized spaces, where gaps exist.

6. Continually assess community needs and proactively plan for recreation programming that aligns to these needs and trends.

Ensure that PARD facilities are offering recreation programming and facilities that address community desires and needs, including emerging and non-traditional sports. Based on community input throughout the planning process, special attention should be given to golf, bocce ball, disc golf, bike polo, and skateparks.

6.1. Convene PARD facility leadership and staff to proactively evaluate strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats at each site to identify small scale improvements that can be made in the short-term to fields, irrigation, programming, and/or building efficiencies.

Examples include: South Austin Recreation Center ballfield improvements, Montopolis Neighborhood Park field improvements, Roy Guerrero Park fields, Alamo Pocket Park solar energy improvements, Red Bud Isle water access.

6.2. Proactively look for ways to maximize flexibility of facilities (e.g., through extended hours) to allow multiple programs and emerging recreation offerings and needs.

During master planning for parks and in the evaluation of facilities, consider new programming and staff needs.

6.3. Periodically evaluate each program through user/staff surveys and develop strategies to assess community response to programming changes.

Utilize the community's feedback in the LRP process as a baseline and consider new or expanded programs tailored to each combined planning area.

6.4. Recruit community residents to lead programming.

PARD program leaders serve as critical links to the community - it is important that there is a focus on equity and representation in the design and implementation of programs.

6.5. Work more closely with PARD staff and community to expand youth programming.

This includes out-of-school time, early childhood recreation & education, parenting classes, youth sports leagues.

6.6. Invest in succession planning for program staffing to ensure seamless transitions, especially for youth programming.

6.7. Pursue opportunities to provide universal access programming and programs tailored to meet the needs of children with physical and developmental disabilities.

6.8. Invest in existing golf infrastructure to maintain conditions.

Projects may include improving cart paths, replacing key bridges, updating irrigation systems, and replacing turf in heavily used areas.



Source: PARD



NATURAL EXPERIENCES	UNSTRUCTURED SPACES	GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE	LINEAR PARKS & TRAILS	PROXIMITY & ACCESS	URBAN SPACES	PARKS & ARTS/CULTURE	EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES	INCLUSIVITY	CLEANLINESS & SAFETY
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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT THEMES



Source: PARD

E. OPTIMIZE & IMPROVE EFFICIENCY OF OPERATIONS



Leverage partnerships and revenue opportunities to elevate the quality of PARD operations and maintenance while upholding equitable park access and ensuring a sustainable and well-balanced PARD budget.



WORK DEVELOPMENT

PHILADELPHIA'S
UNIVERSITY CITY
DISTRICT GREEN
CITY WORKS
PROGRAM PROVIDES
MEANINGFUL
EMPLOYMENT
OPPORTUNITIES.

Green City Works (GCW) is a social venture that builds on the success of the University City District's West Philadelphia Skills Initiative to train, educate, and provide employment opportunities for local residents. GCW is a full-service landscape design-build company that provides high-quality wages and benefits while helping grow the local economy.



Green City Works
Source: University City District

1. Consolidate and improve efficiency of maintenance operations, administrative, and program management functions.
 - 1.1. Consider relocation of maintenance operations staff to a more centralized, accessible, and efficient location.
 - 1.2. Explore locating a new Aquatics Division headquarters close to a pool to make lifeguard training easier.
The Nash Hernandez Building at Edward Rendon Sr. Metro Park at Festival Beach is one option.
 - 1.3. Explore whether three satellite maintenance facilities, geographically dispersed throughout the city, would minimize staff travel time between parks and facilities.
Travel time should be less than 30 percent of a regular staff workday. Potential locations include: Onion Creek (south), Central Main Complex or Bolm District Park (central), and a northern location which may require land acquisition.
 - 1.4. Consider development of a new, centralized PARD Headquarters at current site or on the site of the Central Maintenance Complex (CMC) on Lakeshore Blvd.
With the growth of the department, the staff has become very decentralized. PARD would benefit from a central headquarters close to City Hall, One Texas Center, and the new city office building on East Ben White Blvd. Once CMC is relocated, the Lakeshore Blvd site may be well-suited for a centralized headquarters. This site is large enough to accommodate PARD's growing staff, ideal from a public transportation perspective and is envisioned to be near the Blue Line in CapMetro's Project Connect. The site's proximity to the Butler Trail and Boardwalk open up possibilities for a visitor center and weekend public parking for trail access.
 - 1.5. Expand Maintenance and Operations scope to include care of natural areas and green infrastructure and identify resources and organizational changes needed to support this expanded role.
 - 1.6. Continue to develop a complete asset inventory including condition, risk, and criticality.
This inventory can inform rehab needs and feed into the City's overall asset management system including the Comprehensive Infrastructure Assessment portion of the Long-Range CIP Strategic Plan.

1.7. Formalize and create common standards for an operations and maintenance agreement with school parks and other partner organizations.

Many current agreements are long-standing and divide maintenance responsibilities unequally at school parks.

1.7.1. Develop formal MOUs that detail maintenance responsibility and hours of public access between PARD and each school park.

School parks are valuable places of community gathering and recreation within each neighborhood and have the potential to help meet park needs in already developed areas.

1.7.2. Explore opportunities to partner with school districts to pilot green stormwater or green building practices at school park sites.

As institutions of learning, schools and school parks should be prioritized for installation of highly visible green stormwater infrastructure projects (e.g., permeable paving, green roofs, rain gardens, stormwater parking lot improvements) that can be integrated into the school's curriculum.

1.7.3. Consider proactively working with school districts in the region, in addition to AISD, to plan for new school parks, either on site or adjacent to schools.

As population shifts and growth occur, partner with schools in full purpose jurisdiction to plan for new parks and facilities that can be developed potentially in partnership with the school district.

1.7.4. Work with AISD to understand long-term population shifts that may result in schools being repurposed.

If a school is no longer viable, or will be repurposed, PARD should have the opportunity to evaluate the property for park or recreation use, including cultural, arts and community centers.

2. Improve procurement and contracting process to make it easier to apply for PARD contracts.

Consider moving to an online bid submittal system with e-signature technology, among other improvements. Continue to support procurement of minority- and women-based businesses.



CONSIDERING TOTAL COST OF OWNERSHIP

Communities spend considerable time and resources in land and asset capital development. In considering new park development projects, it is essential to include operational costs, including staff, equipment, and materials, as part of the overall "total cost of ownership." New amenities in parks have a useful lifespan if properly maintained; however, if maintenance practices and annual repairs are not fully funded then the effective lifespan will fall short and could result in a hazard, or additional costs for replacement and removal. The cost of replacement is subject to inflation as labor, materials, and equipment costs increase over time. It is important to consider the short-term (5 years or less) and long-term (5-10 years) forecast to adequately gauge the level of funding needed. Together, capital investment, operations and maintenance, and lifecycle replacement represent the total cost of ownership of a park system. Austin's new Asset Management Division, created in 2018, is responsible for planning and tracking investments.



SPOTLIGHT: HOMELESSNESS

AUSTIN CERTAINLY
ISN'T ALONE IN
SEEKING CREATIVE,
INNOVATIVE, AND
EFFECTIVE WAYS
TO ADDRESS
THE ISSUE OF
HOMELESSNESS.

Parks and recreation departments and employees are increasingly on the front line of dealing with these issues, particularly in the form of people camping in public parks as parks are one of the few truly free and public resources available in most cities. Homelessness has been a recurring and popular topic at recent National Recreation and Park Association and Greater and Greener conferences, often filling rooms for all available sessions. Best practices are still emerging and being developed, and there is not yet a consensus or standard approach. However, homelessness is not specific to city park systems; it exists in communities as a whole and therefore a more comprehensive approach, in which parks and recreation departments work in conjunction with other public agencies, non-profits, and funders representing a variety of disciplines, is a strong approach.

3. Engage with and provide work opportunities in parks to help people experiencing homelessness.

Austin's Ending Homelessness Coalition estimates there are 2,147 homeless individuals in Austin, a five percent increase from 2017. Many Austinites expressed a feeling that urban public spaces are not being taken advantage of and are pass through spaces for individuals experiencing homelessness, which is only amplified by maintenance concerns.

3.1. Strengthen and expand the Workforce First program.

Work with partners to secure additional funding and support to expand the Workforce First program, which currently pays individuals experiencing homelessness to help remove trash in public parks. Expansion could include full-time park ambassador roles or a workforce training track that leads to full-time employment with PARD or partner organizations.

3.2. Consider a holistic approach that brings together police, health, advocacy, conservation, and park operations and maintenance staff to expand resources available to those experiencing homelessness in parks.

4. Improve the value and awareness of parks and recreation system offerings to the community.

Based on the community survey results, many residents placed a high value on parks and recreation, however the percentage of the population using parks regularly is relatively low compared with national averages. This disconnect suggests that there is a need to enhance communications, engagement and marketing to increase awareness and visitation, as well as enhance revenue.

4.1. Increase staff capacity in the Communications and Engagement Division to help bridge the gap between existing resources and offerings and community knowledge of and interaction with the parks system.

A common theme that emerged through the LRP process is the lack of knowledge or the difficulty of getting information about the diverse parks and open space resources in Austin. Through investment in communications and outreach, the city can increase use of facilities and revenue to support the park system.

4.2. Develop an effective reservation, intake and data collection system for users and profile information.

Collect point-of-sale data on users of the parks and recreation services including: youth sports, adult sports enrichment, senior, and outdoor recreation/ environmental education programs. Collect the same data for facility rentals, special events, health and wellness, and aquatics users. This data can be used to inform shifts in programming or outreach efforts.

4.3. Advance the use of technology on marketing and promotions of key programs and recreational offerings as an attraction.

Collect information on point-of-sale entrance and program fees, centralized reservation system for programs and events, and conduct intercept surveys of users and non-park users. Use this information to refine subsequent programs.

4.4. Expand customer training and focus of staff and volunteers on how to communicate the value of Austin's park system to residents and visitors.

Customer service training and philosophy will focus on the basics of customer service for full and part-time staff and volunteers. Additional training will be developed based on direct business planning unit requests to the revenue development staff within the department. Customer satisfaction levels should be tracked in all divisions, reported for assessment and training will be determined based on the results.

4.5. Expand recreation program standards to support core recreations services.

Recreational standards should focus on delivering a consistent high-quality experience while achieving operational and cost recovery goals as well as marketing and communication standards that are needed to create awareness and customer loyalty.

4.6. Consider centralizing programs that leverage outside volunteers and funding.

This will help streamline, track metrics, and provide a high quality and consistent experience for our community. Centralized functions could include volunteer management, docent programs, student internships, community and park partners, corporate sponsorships, Adopt-a-Park Program and affiliated programs/activities.



IN- PROGRESS: WORKFORCE FIRST PROGRAM

**A PARTNERSHIP
BETWEEN AUSTIN
PUBLIC HEALTH, PARKS
AND RECREATION,
FAMILY ELDERCARE,
AND THE OTHER ONES
FOUNDATION.**

The Workforce First Program provides individuals experiencing homelessness with an opportunity to earn income by helping maintain City parks. First launched as a pilot in October 2018, the program provides individuals with income and connects them to resources to help them find permanent employment and housing. Participants earn \$15 per hour to help clear invasive species, clean up litter, and remove graffiti.



Workforce First Program
Source: CBS Austin



PARTNER AGREEMENTS

DEVELOPING PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS WITH FOR-PROFITS, NON-PROFITS, AND GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES TO WORK WITH PARD CAN BE BENEFICIAL AND ENSURE LONG-TERM SUCCESS AND FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY.

With a model partnership agreement, PARD can expand its reach and invest more in its park system. Different partnership classifications can exist in the form of operational partners, vendor partners, service partners, co-branding partners, and fund development partners, allowing the partner to contribute value in the form of operational revenue or capital revenue to help build or maintain the site and/or bring paying users.

5. Develop a clear organizational framework for PARD partnerships that is equitable, supportive of PARD's mission and goals, and is regularly evaluated to track and monitor impacts and outcomes.

5.1. Develop a partnership assessment tool that can be used to help develop a framework for the many types of partnership models and expand FTE staff to create greater support for partner models.

Engage partners in developing a tool that includes delineation by partnership type (e.g., friends groups, non-profits, foundation, public-private, programming, etc.) and results in a consistent guidebook and formal process for entering into partnerships with appropriately defined structures and oversight.

5.2. Use the LRP needs assessment and park condition assessments to match up partners with priority areas of need or specific parks in need of volunteer support.

5.3. Develop goals and metrics to evaluate partnership impacts and share results with the community.

5.4. Communicate areas of need and opportunity with existing and potential partners.

Seek out new partners in highest areas of need.

5.5. Provide opportunities for partners to engage with each other and find potential ways to work together where interests and areas of high need overlap.

5.6. Consider an enhanced donor recognition program that provides structure and opportunities for enhanced public-private partnership and financial support from the Austin community.

6. Pursue sustainability and resiliency goals at all PARD parkland and facilities.

Parks have an essential role to play in community resiliency.

6.1. Coordinate with the Office of Sustainability to meet goals for energy use and carbon neutral operations.

Consider energy efficiency, water conservation efforts, and use of sustainable materials and renewable energy in all new and existing facilities and structures. For example, consider use of solar over parking spaces.

6.2. Work with partners to improve sustainability of purchasing and operations.

Consider adopting efforts like the Good Food Purchasing Program to help drive all food procurement towards a more sustainable, local, and equitable system.

6.3. Consider environmental standards that bolster the health of the surrounding community and the local ecology.

Rating systems, like SITES, provide designers and organizations with guidelines to enhance community benefits and build resiliency that helps reduce flood risk, store carbon, and mitigate the effects of climate change.

6.4. Implement comprehensive recycling and composting standards to meet City of Austin Zero Waste Plan goals.

Ensure that all PARD facilities and events adhere to recycling standards and provide ‘organic diversion’ and composting opportunities and community education.

6.5. Partner with Austin Resource Recovery and the Watershed Protection Department to educate members of the community to ‘Leave No Trace’ (LNT).

Create educational materials and ensure that signage clearly highlights recycling and waste procedures that emphasize “pack it in, pack it out” at all parks. Support Park Rangers as LNT educators and advocates.

6.6. Ensure that emergency operations management and resiliency are included in all park planning efforts.

Parks and their facilities have the ability to bolster resiliency and serve as resiliency hubs by mitigating flooding through green stormwater infrastructure, offsetting carbon emissions with planting, and acting as self-sustaining shelters during power outages and natural disasters.

“Maintenance of existing parks and facilities must include mandatory recycling. It is really hard to believe that Austin doesn’t have recycling bins at parks since residents and businesses are required to recycle at home and work.”

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

2018



FIGURE 21. YETT PARK
Source: PARD

HOW WE GET THERE

REVISED DRAFT FOR REVIEW

Chapter 5 includes a description of the roles and responsibilities of the PARD divisions involved in the LRP, as well other city departments and partners. It also discusses several early action tools that have been developed to better understand current condition needs and priorities. Citywide strategies are applied to the combined park planning area level.

IN THIS CHAPTER

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- + PARD Implementation Structure
- + Contributions of PARD Partners

PRIORITIZING INVESTMENT IN EXISTING PARKS

- + The Score Card Tool
- + The Action Priority Ranking System

COMBINED PLANNING AREA RECOMMENDATIONS

- + Central
- + North
- + East
- + Southeast
- + Southwest
- + West

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- + Funding Options
- + Measuring and Tracking Progress

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

PARD IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURE

PARD as a whole takes responsibility for the implementation of the *Our Parks, Our Future* Long Range Plan, but pieces of it will be owned and advanced by different teams within the PARD organization and by our partners.

PARK PLANNING

Individual park master plans are the primary vehicle to holistically improve existing parks in alignment with the citywide strategies and priority actions laid out in this plan. These individual Park Master Plans will also be led by the Park Planning Division in coordination with other PARD divisions and City of Austin departments. Park Master Plans can either be initiated to guide the development of an undeveloped plot of parkland,

or to guide reinvestment in an already-developed park. In either case, the individual park master planning process is designed to bridge the gap between the citywide and combined planning area goals and the site-specific conditions and community context of each park.



It's My Park Day. Source: PARD

PARKLAND ACQUISITION

A priority goal for the LRP is to increase the number of acres of parkland in Austin as the population grows. The plan sets a goal of 24 of parkland for every 1,000 residents. Parkland acquisition is one of the primary tools in which PARD can ensure equitable access to the benefits of parks and protect and enhance the natural ecosystems that keep the City of Austin a safe, sustainable and beautiful place to live. This is especially important for current underserved areas, environmentally sensitive areas, and high-growth areas. The Park Planning Division is responsible for ensuring that parkland acquisition meets the goals laid out in this plan by identifying acquisition candidates, prioritizing their acquisition to achieve the maximum positive impact, and working with public and private partners to ensure the resources and relationships are in place to complete the acquisitions. The Parkland Acquisition Program utilizes the Long Range Plan to help guide and prioritize land for acquisition, including spatial analysis in GIS, demonstrated needs through community input, gap analysis for infill parks, natural resources including waterway buffers, demographic and growth trends, and recreation trends.



City of Austin tree cover and open space.
Source: PARD

The site analysis for a particular property that could eventually be acquired for parkland includes the following factors:

- ➞ **Need and Equity:** there is a demonstrated need or deficit for a park in a particular area.
- ➞ **Suitability:** the land meets the criteria for the desired use.
- ➞ **Connectivity:** the land provides access to existing parks or continues a greenbelt or trail.
- ➞ **Proximity:** close to a school, neighborhood, water body or some other desired area.
- ➞ **Projected Growth:** a rapidly growing area necessitates advance acquisition in order to secure available land for parks and open space.
- ➞ **Unique Values:** an area has unique environmental, cultural, historic, geologic, scenic or other scarce or endangered resources.
- ➞ **Opportunity:** land is available for acquisition (note: as a policy, condemnation is not used).
- ➞ **Affordability:** land must be within the range of the appraised market value.
- ➞ **Funding:** adequate funding must be available for the acquisition.
- ➞ **Partnership:** a leveraged opportunity with parkland dedication, donation, or another governmental agency.

PARK DEVELOPMENT

Following the acquisition of land, identification of rehabilitation need, or completion of an individual park master plan, the Park Development Division is responsible for the build-out of park facilities and amenities like trails, plazas, buildings, and wayfinding signage. The Park Development Division also is responsible for more basic site preparation like re-grading and drainage infrastructure.

The PARD Park Development Process is standardized into phases of development that follow after acquisition of land – the initial “limited use” period and then three progressive levels of development, each enhancing the park further. The park improvements and amenities which describe levels I, II, III and IV serve as targets for typical development, but are not guaranteed items in each park. The timing, techniques and procedures for accomplishing each level may vary significantly in response to funding availability, constituent preferences and natural characteristics of the parkland.



Undeveloped

When parkland is newly acquired, it is considered “undeveloped.”



Level I Development (Limited Use)

PARD creates cleared trails and allows for minimal access prior to pursuing Level II Development. This marks the beginning of the Park Development Process.



Level II Development

Level II development provides basic recreational opportunities and easy access for the public. The first step is the design process. For all park development projects, basic socio-economic data on likely users and data on the natural features of the park are analyzed to provide a basis for initial design work. A series of conceptual development plans are prepared for review by those who will build, maintain and use the park. The design review process, including meetings with staff, neighborhood representatives and other interested users, is intended to identify design problems and solutions prior to construction. Ultimately, a conceptual plan is refined to a master plan to guide development through Level IV Development.

Typically, Level II development in neighborhood and district parks provides traditional recreational opportunities to the extent possible with the available funds. Open playfields, signage, picnicking, trails and support facilities such as trash receptacles and drinking fountains are typically included. If funds allow, recreational items responsive to specific groups, such as a children’s playscape or community picnic shelter, may also be constructed.

In metropolitan parks and greenbelts, Level II development emphasizes construction of basic infrastructure such as parking lot or trails. Instead of active recreational facilities, Level II development in a metropolitan park provides access to the natural resources found on the site.



Level III Development

Level III development provides many of the remaining facilities typical of the park type. Upon completion of Level III development, a park is not yet finished, but has a wide variety of recreational opportunities typical of its park type. For neighborhood parks, Level II may mean the inclusion of a playground, open playfields with goals, basketball and tennis courts, designated trails, landscaping or irrigation. Level II development in district parks usually results in construction of a swimming pool, recreation center or both.

In metropolitan parks, Level III may include the addition of large playscapes, miles of trails with interpretive signage, restrooms and major recreation facilities such as sports complexes or swimming pools. Since items in a metropolitan park are generally more expensive than facilities found in other park types, several funding cycles may be needed to complete its Level III development. Level II development in greenbelts and special parks varies considerably, but generally accommodates increased visitation through additional infrastructure or expansion of a main facility.



Level IV Development

For Level IV development, final improvements are made to complete the park's full potential. Typical improvements might include special landscaping, recreation facilities for special interest groups or formalization of informally designated use areas. Level IV development is usually initiated when existing park facilities are well-used and their infrastructure is still sound. Many parks found in the older part of central Austin have reached the Level IV stage, where a full range of recreational facilities exist.



Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation is required when a park, facilities or infrastructure are falling into disrepair due to age or heavy use, or when the park no longer responds to target user groups or new standards. Rehabilitation may be for a specific facility within a park, may include a general face-lift to the park showing signs of heavy wear and tear, or may require complete redevelopment in order to respond to changing user needs. Whatever the extent of wear/damage, the rehabilitation project will cycle back through the Park Development Process.

OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

Recommendations under Citywide Strategy E (Optimize & Improve Efficiency of Operations) will be implemented by the Operations and Maintenance Division, which is organized into Facilities and Parks & Grounds sub-divisions. Together these two sub-divisions are responsible for the O&M needs of all parkland. These O&M needs are handled at the district level and in some cases at the individual facility level for large-scale and heavy-use facilities like Zilker Park. Additionally, specialized O&M teams exist for mowing, graffiti, playgrounds, horticulture, trails, plumbing, turf, athletics fields, and courts.

In addition to the Operations and Maintenance Division, there are also four independent specialized divisions for cemeteries, aquatics, golf services, and special events that are part of PARD's overall administration rather than nested within the Operations and Maintenance Division because their O&M needs are different enough from the general parkland maintenance needs.

The Asset Management Division will also play a role in supporting Citywide Strategy E through its information technology, geospatial, business process, and Capital Improvement Program Planning/Management.

Across all sub-divisions responsible for operations and maintenance, PARD strives to meet the following park maintenance guidelines:



Service Level I: State-of-the-art-maintenance

Applied to a high-quality diverse landscape, this is associated with high-traffic urban areas, such as public squares, malls, government grounds, colleges, or university campuses.



Service Level II: High-level maintenance

This is associated with well-developed public areas, malls, government grounds, or college/university campuses. Recommended level for most organizations.



Service Level III: Moderate-level maintenance

This is associated with locations that have moderate to low levels of development or visitation, or with operations that, because of budget restrictions, cannot afford a higher level of maintenance.



Service Level IV: Moderately low-level maintenance

This is associated with locations affected by budget restrictions that cannot afford a high level of maintenance.



Service Level V: Minimum-level maintenance

This is associated with locations that have severe budget restrictions.



Service Level VI: Natural area that is not developed

PROGRAM DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

Program design and development will be implemented by a collection of sub-divisions, each of which is responsible for a specific type of programming:

Museums and Cultural Programs Sub-Division

- + Arts Centers
- + Cultural Centers
- + Museums

Community Recreation Sub-Division

- + Community Programs / Recreation Centers
- + Senior Programs / Services

Centralized Programs Sub-Division

- + Out of School Programs
- + Athletics

Nature Based Programs Sub-Division

- + Park Rangers
- + Forestry
- + Gardens and Preserves
- + Nature Centers

COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

Community outreach and engagement will continue to be an important part of plan implementation both in terms of the continued planning of individual parks and programs, and also in terms of promoting the use of those parks and programs (existing and new). The Communications and Engagement sub-division will be the lead entity ensuring that the planning processes and promotion of parks and programs is reaching a wider audience and providing valuable information and input opportunities.

The Communications and Engagement sub-division will also specifically be responsible for the implementation of community outreach and engagement recommendations nested under Citywide Strategies B and D.

The Asset Management Division will also play a role in supporting Citywide Strategies B and D through its information technology, geospatial, business process, and engineering capacity. Additional staffing and funding for the Communication and Engagement Division is recommended in the plan strategies.



Playing soccer
Source: PARD

CONTRIBUTIONS OF PARD PARTNERS

Partnerships are a vital part of the work that PARD does on a day-to-day basis and over the long-term implementation of the plan. Park partnerships occur at different scales and may focus on a specific initiative or citywide priority – or may be geographically focused on a park or neighborhood. Many organizations and partners are actively engaged in park-related improvements that touch on the LRP priorities and PARD’s mission. Ongoing park partnerships and their priorities include:

AUSTIN PARKS FOUNDATION

EST. 1992, CITYWIDE

MISSION: *to partner with our community to enhance people’s lives by making our public parks, trails and green spaces better through volunteerism, innovative programming, advocacy and financial support.*

CURRENT KEY PLANS & INITIATIVES

- + Colony Park: In partnership with the City of Austin, with support from St David’s Foundation, development of 93 acre site which will include multi-use trails, children’s play environment, two sports fields, a pavilion, benches. Will also include a fitness plaza supported by Dell Match Play.
- + Pan Am Park: In partnership with the City of Austin and with support from the ACL Music Festival, this project is a complete playground rehabilitation, including ADA improvements and connectivity to the adjacent school and recreation center at Pan American Neighborhood Park.
- + Eastlink: In partnership with the City of Austin and the Mueller Foundation, this multi-use community trail will link Bartholomew Park to Lady Bird Lake, and connect residents to community assets in a safer more accessible way.
- + Ongoing Programs: ACL Music Festival Grants Program, It’s My Park Day, Design Services, Adopt-A-Park Program, Little Hummingbird Society, Movies in the Park.

PRIORITIES & GOALS FOR THE NEXT 10 YEARS

- + Execute programs and projects in alignment with APF’s mission that develop, maintain and preserve all our parks; build community engagement; support active, healthy communities, and clearly meet needs in underserved communities.
- + Influence the long-term sustainability of parks, trails and green spaces by increasing awareness and understanding among local decision makers of the importance of providing appropriate funding, legislation and resources.
- + Assure diversified funding streams to further expand APF’s contribution to Austin’s parks, trails and green spaces.



**AUSTIN
PARKS
FOUNDATION**



Dove Springs Playscape
Source: APF



Downtown Austin Open Space
Source: DAA

MISSION: *to create, preserve, and enhance the value and vitality of downtown Austin.*

CURRENT KEY PLANS & INITIATIVES

- + Republic Square: Through a unique public-private non-profit partnership, the Downtown Austin Alliance, Austin Parks Foundation, and PARD partnered to renovate the historic square and elevate its status once again as an important gathering place in the heart of downtown Austin. The Downtown Alliance through the Downtown Parks LLC is responsible for operations and maintenance for the square, along with community programming, managing the café building and operator, event booking and logistical support.
- + Interpretive Planning & Implementation: Documenting and telling the diverse stories of the people and places who shaped important downtown civic spaces, offering an important historical perspective. This has resulted in interpretive signage, events and programs, walking tours, and guidance on how to integrate history into future initiatives downtown.
- + Historic Squares: Advancing current plans for renovation and preservation of Brush and Wooldridge Squares, including advancement of Brush Square Master Plan and continued support for security at Brush Square.

PRIORITIES & GOALS FOR THE NEXT 10 YEARS

- + Advancing the Downtown Vision. The community-based Downtown Vision, completed in 2018, outlines a number of goals that help to advance the vision's priority for creating Welcoming Places. These goals range from creating and activating new parks and plazas to fully connecting to and leveraging the downtown waterfront.
- + Completing and promoting the Urban Greenbelt. The Urban Greenbelt is a 5-mile network of parks, places and experience that encircle downtown. It is currently being created by a number of public and private partners.
- + Republic Square is first and foremost a neighborhood park with a design intended to support and encourage regular, daily use of the park. Our long term goals are to continue to provide a safe, comfortable green-space that is inclusive and welcoming to a diverse group of users ranging including families, transit users, seniors, neighbors and downtown visitors to name a few. Curate programming that is multicultural, collaborative, interactive and accessible -- positioning the park as a neighborhood, civic space in a network of downtown public spaces.

STRONGER AUSTIN

EST. 2017, SERVING AUSTIN'S UNDERSERVED
NEIGHBORHOODS



MISSION : *Stronger Austin believes that every neighborhood in Austin should have easy access to health and wellness programs. Stronger Austin is a joint initiative of PARD and the Austin Public Health Department that provides free exercise classes, after school programs, and nutrition education right in the heart of the Austin communities we serve.*

CURRENT KEY PLANS & INITIATIVES

- + Free exercise classes, nutrition access, healthcare services and after school programming.

PRIORITIES & GOALS FOR THE NEXT 10 YEARS

- + Solidify Stronger Austin's four pillar model with a cohesive participant tracking plan.
The four pillars are:
 - Expanded Out-Of-School Time
 - Fitness in the Park & Group Fitness Classes
 - Nutrition/Cooking Education Classes
 - Activity Groups
- + Increase diversity in class offerings.
- + Grow programming such that it aligns with the community's needs and the plans from the City of Austin.



Stronger Austin Group Fitness
Source: Stronger Austin



GO AUSTIN / VAMOS AUSTIN (GAVA)

EST. 2015, SERVING THOSE WHO LIVE, WORK, OR WORSHIP IN DOVE SPRINGS (78744), SOUTH AUSTIN (78745), AND NORTH-CENTRAL AUSTIN (ST. JOHNS AND THE RUNDBERG AREA)

MISSION : *GAVA organizes and mobilizes community power to reduce barriers to health while increasing institutional capacity to respond to the people most impacted by historic inequities.*

CURRENT KEY PLANS & INITIATIVES

- + Increasing access to improved nutrition and physical activity opportunities by organizing to improve the built environment and creating partnerships that provide healthy programming and activities.
- + Building community power for health through organizing and leadership development.
- + Foster community permanency via anti-displacement efforts.

PRIORITIES & GOALS FOR THE NEXT 10 YEARS

- + Cultivate a strong network of community leaders and partnered organizations that support health equity.
- + Continue to improve access to green spaces, active living and opportunities for improved health in our neighborhoods of focus, while also mitigating the effects of displacement so that people are able to achieve the long-term health outcomes that we know GAVA's wins can create if people can stay in place.

Priorities include:

- + Ensure equitable spending on parks, public works, transit and other infrastructure in the built environment, e.g., ensuring that all parks have adequate lighting, walking/running areas, drinking water access and restrooms (even if portable) before funds are all divided equally.
- + Ensure access to culturally inclusive, geographically accessible and economically affordable physical activity and sports programming for families in our neighborhoods of focus.
- + Ensure processes for participatory budgeting, development and community planning that center those most directly impacted by health disparities.
- + Increase the demand for and use of healthy programming, assets and facilities.
- + Preserve affordable housing and influencing the equitable creation of new housing and community assets.
- + Create and maintain equitable research and evaluation mechanisms for population health efforts that center the people being studied and allow them to set the indicators and metrics, own their own data, and be able to participate in using the information to make change.

THE TRAIL FOUNDATION

EST. 2003, FOCUSED ON THE BUTLER HIKE-AND-BIKE TRAIL, SURROUNDING PARKLAND AND LADY BIRD LAKE



MISSION: *to protect, enhance, and connect the Butler Hike-and-Bike Trail at Lady Bird Lake for the benefit of all. The Butler Trail is the 10-mile lush, urban path in the heart of Austin that gets more than 2.6 million visits every year. Since it was founded in 2003, The Trail Foundation has achieved restoration and beautification projects to the trail's infrastructure and environment, while honoring the original vision of the trail's founders and ensuring its vibrancy for generations to come.*

CURRENT KEY PLANS & INITIATIVES

- + Ecological Restoration
- + 15 Projects for the 15th Anniversary
- + Exploring the possibility of establishing an agreement that would transition the responsibilities of operations and maintenance of the Butler Trail, and surrounding parkland, from the Parks & Recreation Department to The Trail Foundation.

PRIORITIES & GOALS FOR THE NEXT 10 YEARS

Recently, The Trail Foundation established criteria by which its projects are selected. These criteria centered around two focus areas: 1) Community need and benefit, and 2) TTF's capacity and ability to complete the projects. With these criteria in mind, TTF selected 15 charter projects in honor of its 15th anniversary and created the Corgan Canopy Fund dedicated to financing the initial phases of each future project. Slated for completion over the next five years, the 15 projects range from new trailheads and bathrooms to new water access points and playgrounds. Nine projects are on the east side of the Trail, four on the west, and two along the entirety of the Trail.



The Butler Trail
Source: The Trail Foundation



PEASE PARK CONSERVANCY

EST. 2008, FOCUSED ON PEASE PARK, FROM 15TH STREET TO 31ST STREET.

MISSION: *to celebrate the diverse ecology and history that make Austin's first public park valuable and unique. The Conservancy works to restore, enhance and maintain this 84-acre public green space for the sustainable use and enjoyment of all.*

PRIORITIES & GOALS FOR THE NEXT 10 YEARS

In partnership with PARD, the Conservancy will evaluate potential future phases for implementation of the Pease Park Master Plan approved by the Austin City Council in 2014.

CURRENT KEY PLANS & INITIATIVES

- + Kingsbury Commons Project: In partnership with PARD, the Conservancy is embarking on an exciting new project to revitalize the southernmost tip of Pease Park, known as Kingsbury Commons. As the recreational heart and cultural soul of Pease Park, Kingsbury Commons serves as the welcoming front door to the park and consequently, has been prioritized as the first major project implemented from the Pease Park Master Plan. The Project Team has designed a world class park experience with features that include the adaptive repurposing of the Tudor Cottage as a community gathering space with new terraced seating, a unique nature play area, state-of-the-art water play feature, an innovative treescape, safe and inviting park gateways, a spring-fed water feature, improved basketball court and baseball field, a new volunteer plaza and storage building, multi-generational workout equipment, enhanced restrooms, new bocce court and numerous new native plantings.
- + Land Stewardship/Operating & Maintenance Agreement: The Conservancy is embarking on a process with PARD to develop a land stewardship and O&M agreement with the City of Austin for the area included in the Kingsbury Commons Project. The goal is to create a public/private partnership that will serve as a model for conservancies across the city and across the country to help ensure that urban green spaces will be restored, enhanced and maintained for the sustainable use and enjoyment of all.



Rendering of Kingsbury Commons Project
Source: Pease Park Foundation

BARTON SPRINGS CONSERVANCY

EST. 2014



BARTON SPRINGS CONSERVANCY

MISSION: *to honor, preserve, and enhance the experience of Barton Springs through education and facility improvements.*

CURRENT KEY PLANS & INITIATIVES

Completion of Barton Springs Bathhouse rehabilitation project (design and construction).

PRIORITIES & GOALS FOR THE NEXT 10 YEARS

Future facility and education improvement projects include:

- + Expanded education and outreach programming to increase access, including 2019 “Family Days at the Springs” for Housing Authority for the City of Austin (HACA) families
- + Construction of Zilker Park Visitor Welcome/Education Center
- + Zilker Park Master Plan
- + Continuing outreach efforts, including the Huston-Tillotson University student orientation events, Deep Dives lecture series, and the social history of Barton Springs
- + Selected projects from 2008 Barton Springs Pool Master Plan (e.g., visitor center, south side restroom, parking lot improvements, retention ponds, etc).



Barton Springs
Source: Barton Springs Conservancy

WATERLOO GREENWAY

EST. 2010

MISSION: *to create and maintain an extraordinary urban park system and a restored Waller Creek, in partnership with the City of Austin, for the benefit of all. The Conservancy renews the natural environment, promotes play, health and wellness, economic vitality and mobility, and engages the community through outreach, education, cultural events, and the arts. Waterloo Greenway is a 1.5-mile park system with the power to bring the entire Austin community together.*

CURRENT KEY PLANS & INITIATIVES

- + Once complete, the 35 of connected green space – meandering along downtown’s eastern edge from Lady Bird Lake to 15th St. – will be home to a wild array of natural and cultural destinations.
- + A significant public-private partnership between the City of Austin and Waterloo Greenway Conservancy, this park is being planned, designed, and built in a series of geographic milestones. Phase 1: Waterloo Park, including the Moody Amphitheater, will open in 2020.

waterloo greenway



Waterloo Park
Source: Waterloo Greenway

SHOAL CREEK CONSERVANCY

EST. 2013, FOCUSED ON SHOAL CREEK WATERSHED

MISSION: *to champion the Shoal Creek watershed in order to create a healthy and vibrant community.*

CURRENT KEY PLANS & INITIATIVES

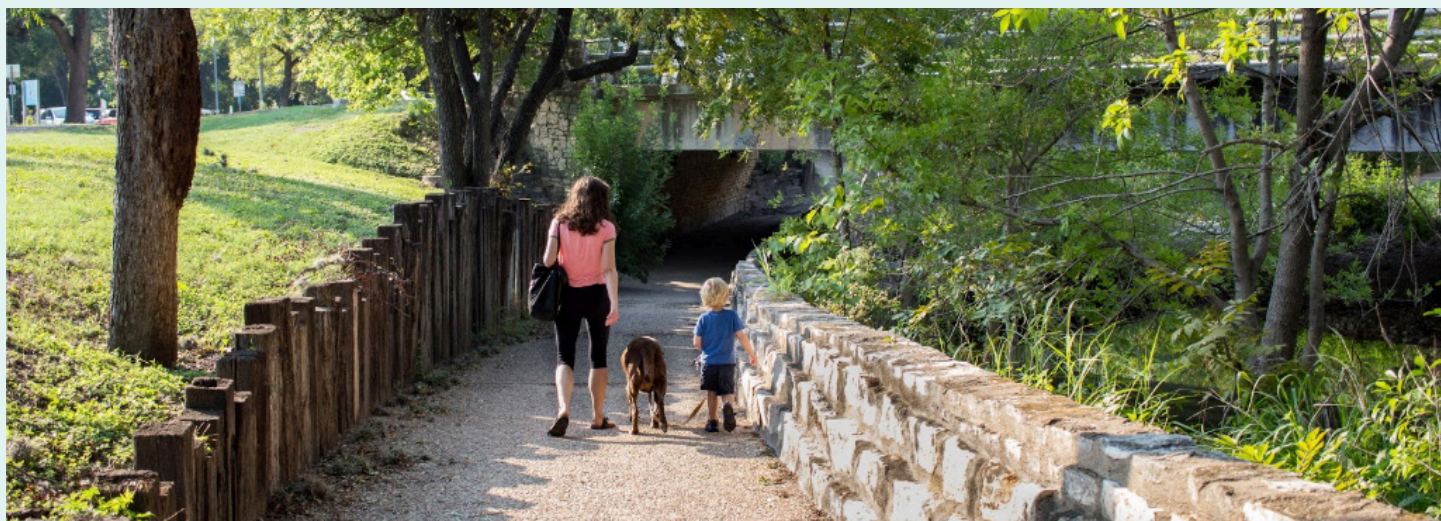
- + Create a Shoal Creek Watershed Action Plan to act as a guiding document to restore and protect the creek's water quality and address erosion, habitat and spring flow challenges.
- + Implement projects outlined in the Shoal Creek Trail Vision to Action Plan to improve and expand the Shoal Creek Trail.
- + Create a public plaza with improved bike and pedestrian pathway at Cypress & Shoal Creek/rail trestle site.

PRIORITIES & GOALS FOR THE NEXT 10 YEARS

- + Create a seamless network of wayfinding signage, so users can easily navigate the Shoal Creek Trail from street intersections, Lady Bird Lake trail and the Northern Walnut Creek trail intersection
- + Significantly increase the number of trail users and event attendees, expand park user base to more residents from other parts of the city
- + Explore possibility of having concessionaires along the trail
- + Add safety features to protect pedestrian and on-road cyclists along the Shoal Creek Trail's on-street sections
- + Create a sustainable framework for maintenance of the creek, trail and trail amenities.



**SHOAL
CREEK**
CONSERVANCY



Shoal Creek Trail

Source: Shoal Creek Conservancy

ZILKER BOTANICAL GARDEN CONSERVANCY

EST. 2015, FOCUSED ON ZILKER BOTANICAL GARDEN



MISSION: *to inspire people of all ages to treasure, promote, and protect the botanical wonders of our world.*

CURRENT KEY PLANS & INITIATIVES

- + Transition management/staffing at the Garden from the City of Austin to the Conservancy and expand staff to meet needs.
- + Complete a site/master plan for the Garden and raise funds through a capital campaign to begin plan implementation.
- + Expand events and educational programming offered at the Garden.

PRIORITIES & GOALS FOR THE NEXT 10 YEARS

- + Transition operation of the gate from the CoA to the Conservancy.
- + Increase attendance at the Garden and grow membership program.
- + Expand events and educational programming offered at the Garden.
- + Fund and complete a site/master plan for the Garden.
- + Manage a capital campaign to fund site/master plan.
- + Begin implementation of the site/master plan.
- + Transition rentals from the CoA to the Conservancy.
- + Transition grounds staff from the CoA to the Conservancy.



Zilker Botanical Garden
Source: PARD



UMLAUF SCULPTURE GARDEN & MUSEUM

EST. 1991

MISSION: *to exhibit the work of Charles Umlauf, his influences, and other contemporary sculptors in a natural setting, and provide educational experiences that encourage the understanding and appreciation of sculpture.*

CURRENT KEY PLANS & INITIATIVES

- + Be a Museum for the city of Austin that is accessible and affordable.
- + Contribute to Austin's reputation and identity as a cultural arts destination by welcoming guests from around the world to our Museum in the heart of the city.
- + Provide educational opportunities and experiences for people of all ages to learn more about sculpture, art in nature, and the life and work of Charles Umlauf.

PRIORITIES & GOALS FOR THE NEXT 10 YEARS

The UMLAUF would like to make inroads on opening the home and studio of Charles Umlauf to the public as well as continuing to grow and gain a reputation as a premiere arts destination in Austin. The UMLAUF is also looking to address some of the challenges that will come with growth, especially in nearby parts of the city (e.g. parking and accessibility).



Umlauf Sculpture Garden
Source: Umlauf Sculpture Garden & Museum

NORWOOD PARK FOUNDATION

EST. 2012

MISSION : *to restore Austin's iconic Arts & Crafts Norwood House to its historic 1922 exterior appearance, and repurpose the home and surrounding estate grounds to serve the people as a premier, nonprofit and self-sustaining rental venue and community meeting space.*

CURRENT KEY PLANS & INITIATIVES

The Norwood project is currently in site development permitting, with a goal to break ground by the end of 2019 and be open to the public by 2022, the 100-year anniversary of the Norwood House.

PRIORITIES & GOALS FOR THE NEXT 10 YEARS

The initial priority will be to successfully launch operation of the Norwood House both as a public asset with open hours and as a premier event venue available for private rental. The goal will be to balance these uses to achieve 100% sustainable self-sufficiency while making the historic bungalow and grounds available as much as possible to park visitors and as an affordable community meeting space.



Artist rendering of the Norwood House
Source: Norwood House Foundation

RED LINE PARKWAY INITIATIVE

EST. 2017, FOCUSED ON THE 32-MILE RED LINE
CORRIDOR AND ITS ENVIRONS

MISSION: *to empower diverse communities to enjoy, develop, and enhance the Red Line Trail and Parkway corridor to serve Central Texas mobility, recreation, parks, arts, affordability, social equity, physical & mental health, public space, and economic needs.*

CURRENT KEY PLANS & INITIATIVES

- + Develop parkway plan, including trail, parks, and public spaces, in coordination with stakeholders.
- + Raise funding for building the parkway.
- + Activate the parkway via events and wayfinding along existing routes.

PRIORITIES & GOALS FOR THE NEXT 10 YEARS

- + Complete construction of the 32-mile Red Line Trail.
- + Build stronger walking, bicycling, and trail connections to the parkway, including increased connections to the MetroRail Red Line commuter rail.
- + Develop partnerships and supporters among trail users all along the corridor.
- + Create new parks and water features along the corridor.
- + Develop public art and curated landscapes along the corridor.
- + Ensure development of affordable housing along the corridor.
- + Guide development to face and serve the parkway.
- + Provide programming for and promote the parkway.
- + Ensure ongoing maintenance and enhancement of the parkway, including wayfinding.



Red Line Trail
Source: Red Line Parkway Initiative

PRIORITIZING INVESTMENT IN EXISTING PARKS

THE SCORE CARD TOOL

What are the park score cards?

As part of our efforts to better monitor and track park condition information and to communicate needs with the community and partners, PARD is piloting a park score card tool that provides a snapshot of a park's needs and determine areas where parks are performing well and areas where we need improvement. Criteria for the score cards include topics of park access, key features, supportive facilities, safety & maintenance concerns, aesthetics, and health. This tool is being piloted for neighborhood and pocket parks and is tied to a similar survey tool through the Park Partnership Program. The score card will evolve over time and can be updated as additional park assessments are completed.

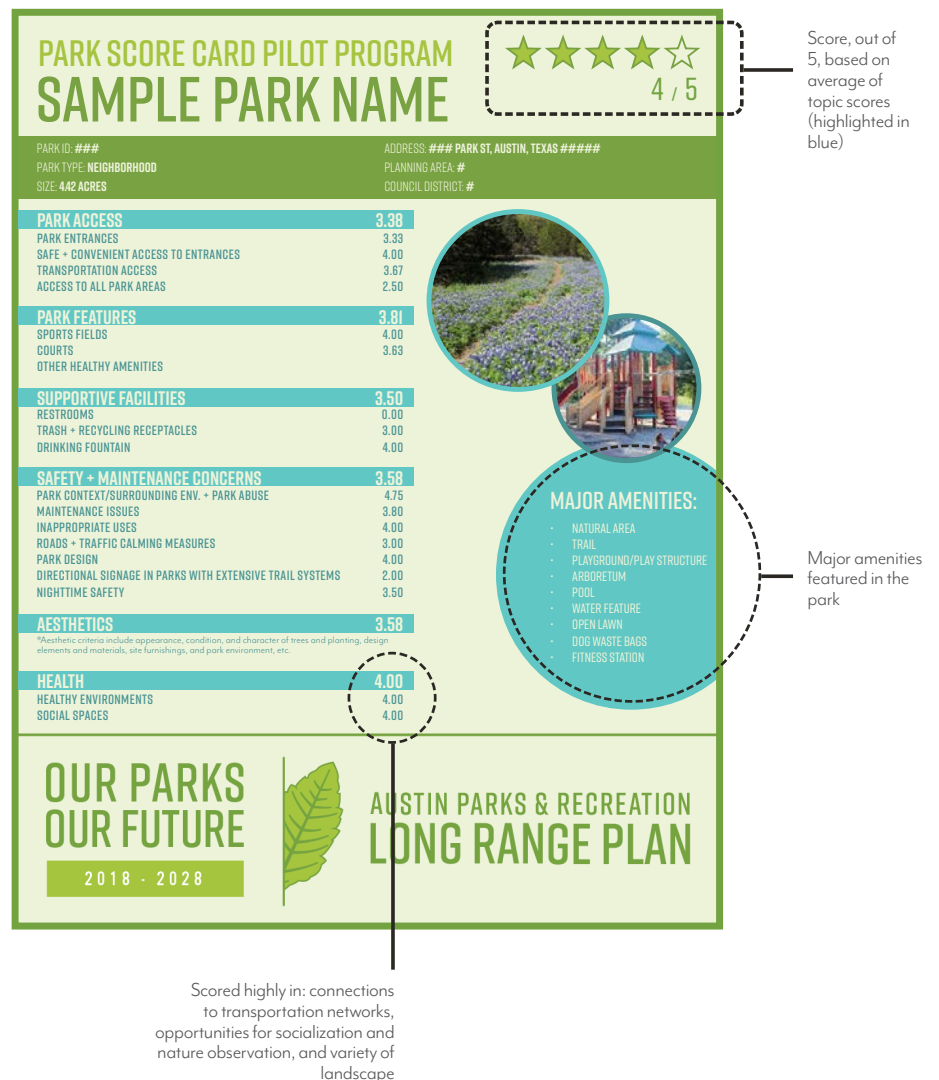


FIGURE 22. SAMPLE PARK SCORE CARD
 Source: WRT

THE ACTION PRIORITY RANKING SYSTEM

How were current park conditions evaluated?

PARD staff and Studio Balcones, a local Austin Landscape Architecture firm, visited all PARD parks that could be accessed to complete detailed park condition assessments based on pre-determined common criteria. This field evaluation occurred from November of 2018 through April of 2019 followed by two months of review and cross-checking to ensure consistency and accuracy, concluding in June of 2019. The individual assessments were then compiled and given weighted ranking of their relative performance, which resulted in an overall score at the individual park and park planning area level.

How will they be used?

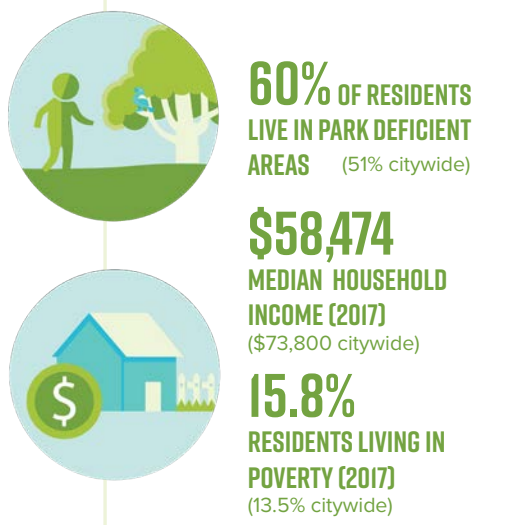
These score cards will be both a snapshot and a living database PARD can utilize to make data-driven, priority-based decisions for investment. The assessments will be employed to increase accountability, transparency, and equity in park level of service across the city.

The LRP includes both citywide and park planning area strategies and actions. In order to develop specific recommendations by park planning area, PARD staff reviewed 1) all previous LRP recommendations and priorities from neighborhood plans, as well as recent citywide plans with a focus on the City of Austin *Strategic Direction 2023*; 2) current status of plans and park development and identified needs within each planning area; 3) demographic conditions and trends to determine areas where needs may exist and opportunities to improve equity; and 4) LRP survey results and community feedback. Staff developed a ranking system to review each potential LRP action. This tool will be used to track progress over time and to select priorities for future funding on an annual, ongoing basis.

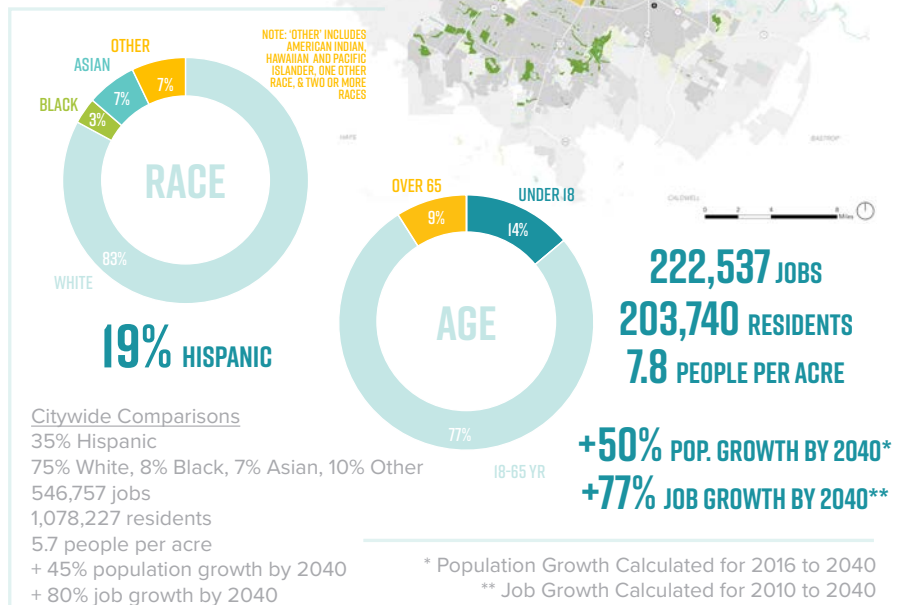
COMBINED PLANNING AREA RECOMMENDATIONS

CENTRAL

CENTRAL, AT A GLANCE



All “At A Glance” statistics are calculated using the 5 mile ETJ boundary NOT the City of Austin boundary.



TOP ISSUES

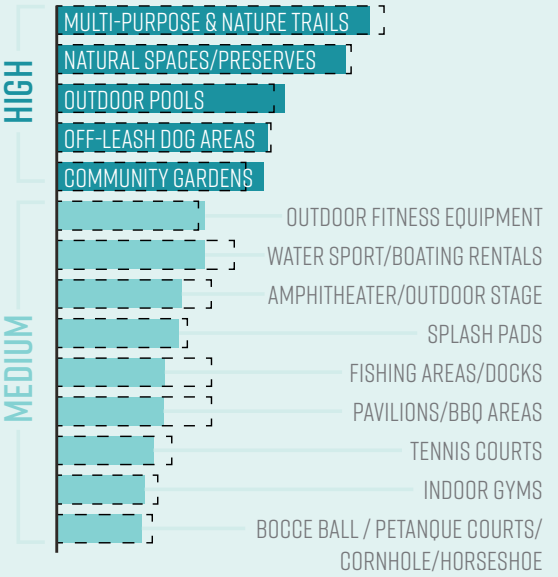
- + **Expanding park access when land is costly.** Existing parks in central are rich in amenities, but access to those facilities is low with only 40% living within walking distance to a park. Given the dense development pattern in central Austin, location, and high land costs, potential new parkland may be difficult and expensive to acquire.
- + **Integrating parks into new development.** As development continues and the population continues to grow, expand convenient and safe access to parks to keep up with growing demand.
- + **Cultivating active urban park spaces.** Some of the city’s smaller centrally-located urban parks are underperforming. Public-private partnerships may be an important tool to revitalize urban parks and ensure they are diverse, engaging, and welcoming to all residents with more frequent and active programming.
- + **Parks in non-residential areas.** Many parts of the central area are dominated by non-residential office, institutional, and commercial uses that have unique park needs, including a surge in the daytime population.

CURRENT & FUTURE NEEDS

What We Heard

Feedback from surveys of central area residents closely match feedback from Austin residents as whole. Residents would like to see more trails, natural areas, outdoor pools, as well as farmers’ markets, events (concerts, nature programs, movies in the park) and exercise programs in parks.

Facility & Amenity Priorities



PRIORITIZATION PROCESS
Based on the statistically valid survey of residents of this Combined Planning Area, the priorities above have emerged in this ranked order (compared against the citywide prioritization of the same elements, depicted in the black dashed outline). The prioritization is intended as a guide and while new or niche activities may not rank high overall, PARD can consider opportunities for piloting or testing where opportunities arise (e.g., at Metro or District Parks).

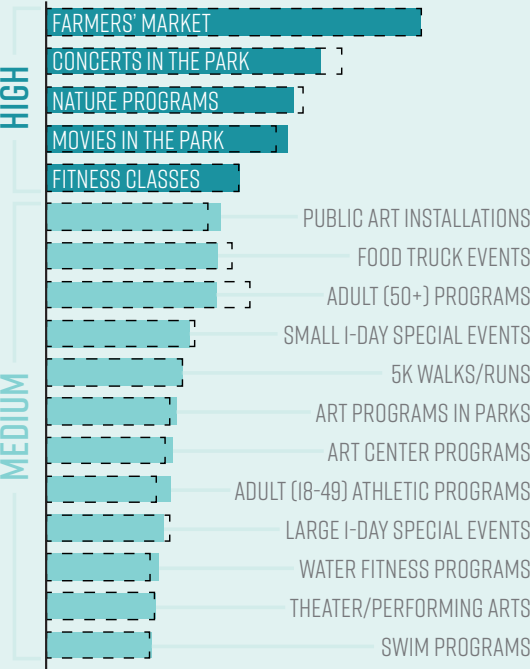
Areas for Investment

Based on initial Level of Service guidelines, the following current and projected needs are expected up to 2034.

Parkland & Indoor Facilities

✓	GREENBELTS
✓	NATURE PRESERVES
✓	TRAILS
✓	POCKET PARKS
✓	NEIGHBORHOOD / SCHOOL PARKS
✓	RECREATION / COMMUNITY CENTER

Program Priorities



Outdoor Amenities

+	Baseball Diamond (Teen/Adult)
+	Softball Diamond (Youth/Adult)
+	Disc Golf Course (9 hole)
+	Playground
+	Off-Leash Dog Area
+	Tennis Court (Publicly Accessible)
+	Pickleball Court (Publicly Accessible)
+	Outdoor Basketball Court
+	Reservable Picnic Shelters
+	Skate Park / BMX Bike
+	Rectangle Fields (Mixed-use, including soccer)

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

PARK DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION	
Adams-Hemphill Neighborhood Park	develop and implement vision plan, improve accessibility and key amenities
Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail	complete implementation
Auditorium Shores at Town Lake Metro Park	renovation complete, revisit off leash dog area following new standards
Barton Creek Greenbelt	improve access points, signage, wayfinding
Blunn Creek Preserves	improve access, trailhead, and nature play
Brush Square	master plan implementation; complete restoration of O. Henry Museum
Bull Creek District Park	master plan implementation
Butler Park	complete Alliance Children's Garden
Covert Park at Mt. Bonnell	landscape restoration and visitor enhancements - design and construction
Dougherty Art Center at Butler Shores	complete design and implementation
Duncan Neighborhood Park	master plan implementation
Elisabet Ney Museum	development of visitors center on north side of Waller Creek; complete restoration of doors and windows and rehabilitation of building systems
Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center	implement phase two of Master Plan
Grove at Shoal Creek	park system master plan implementation, includes off-leash dog area
Highland Neighborhood Park and Reznicek Fields	implement phase two of Master Plan
Lamar Beach at Town Lake Metro Park	master plan implementation
Northwest Recreation Center	improve and add athletic fields and courts to enhance programming
Norwood House	rehab house, master plan implementation
Mayfield Nature Preserve	rehabilitate buildings, grounds, and ponds
Old Bakery Emporium & Visitors Center	rehab and plaza renovation
Pease District Park	continue master plan implementation
Perry Neighborhood Park	work with AISD to improve access
Reed Neighborhood Park	continue renovations
Seaholm Waterfront	master plan implementation
South Austin Neighborhood Park	master plan implementation, includes trail & multi-use field improvements
Steck Valley Greenbelt	improvements and pocket park development
Umlauf Sculpture Garden	rehabilitation of historic buildings
Veterans Pocket Park	implement Phase I development
Waller Creek Greenbelt	continue to collaborate on improvements (including Waterloo Park, Palm Park, Refuge, and Delta)
Walsh Boat Landing	implement improvements
West Austin Neighborhood Park	master plan implementation, includes addressing failing retaining walls
Wooldridge Square	master plan implementation

PARK DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION	
Work with AISD to implement parks at:	<p>Pre-K Schools: <i>Uphaus Early Childhood Center, Read Pre-K Demonstration</i></p> <p>Elementary Schools: <i>Webb Primary, Gullet, Reilly, Wooten, Pillow, Brentwood, Brown, Lee, Pease, Ridgetop, Dawson, Travis Heights, Zilker, Galindo, Barton Hills, Becker, Doss, Hill, Bryker Woods, Casis, Mathews, Highland Park, Austin State Hospital</i></p> <p>Middle Schools: <i>Lamar, Burnet, Webb, Murchison, O. Henry</i></p> <p>Middle & High Schools: <i>Richards School For Young Women Leaders</i></p> <p>High Schools: <i>Mccallum, Travis, Premier at Travis, Anderson, Austin, Travis County Juvenile Detention Center, Phoenix Academy, Leadership Academy</i></p> <p>Special Needs: <i>Rosedale</i></p>

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS	
Shoal Creek	reestablish the trail connection in landslide area

ACQUISITIONS	
Blunn Creek Greenbelt	acquisition and trail development
West and East Bouldin Creek Greenbelt	acquisition and trail development
New parkland within park deficient areas	

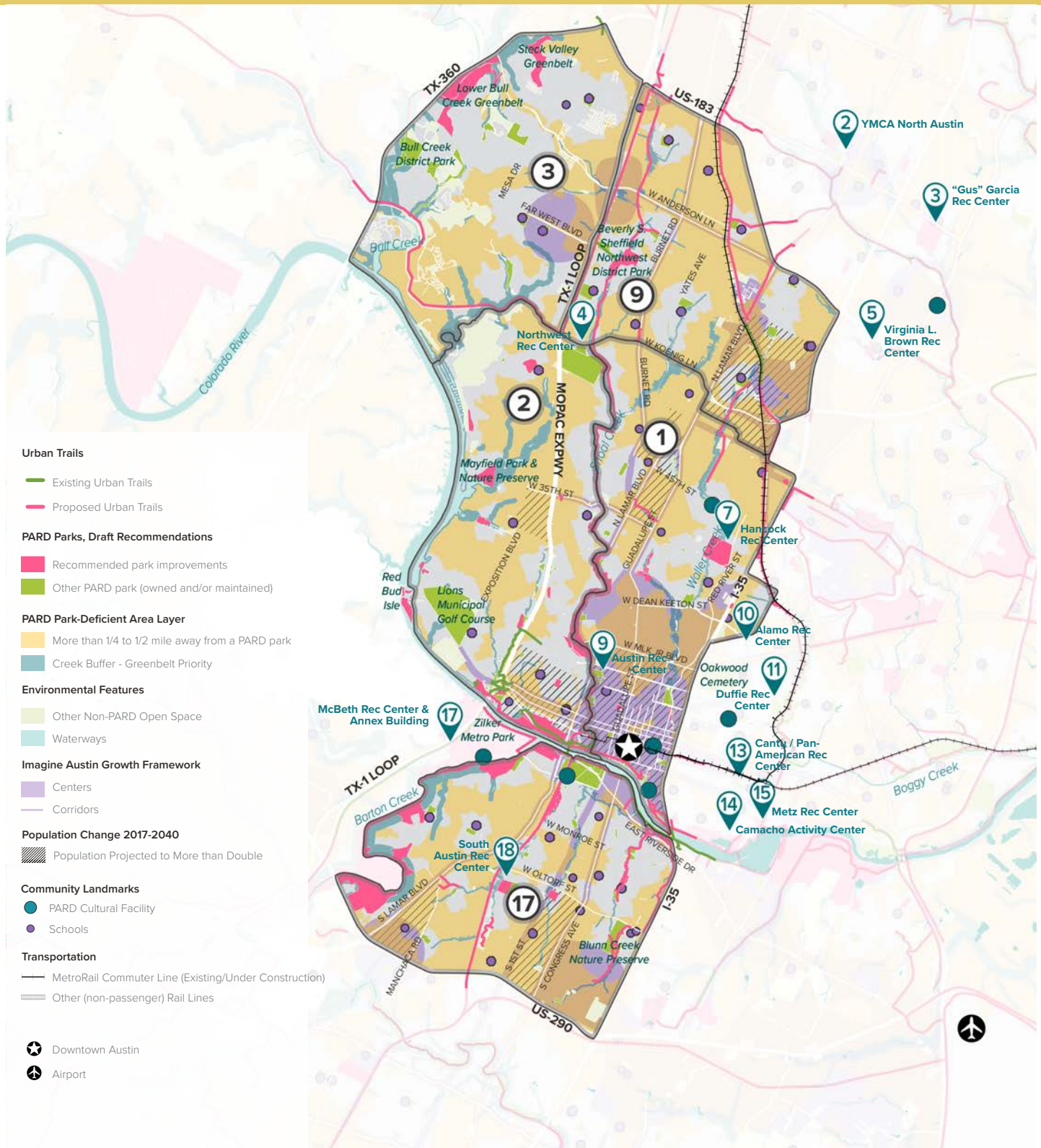
MASTER PLANNING	
Beverly S Sheffield Northwest District Park Master Plan	including Level 2-3 development
Butler Shores at Town Lake Metro Park	master plan
Gillis Neighborhood Park Master Plan	including reinvestment in key amenities

PARTNERSHIPS	
Austin Parks Foundation	continue to collaborate
Downtown Austin Alliance	continue to collaborate
Norwood House Foundation	continue to collaborate
Pease Park Conservancy	continue to collaborate on improvements
Shoal Creek Conservancy	continue to collaborate on improvements
The Trail Foundation	continue to collaborate
UT Austin: Brackenridge Tract	work with UT to retain golf and/or recreational opportunities
Umlauf Sculpture Garden	continue to collaborate
Waterloo Greenway	continue to collaborate

FEASIBILITY STUDIES	
Hancock Golf Course	study feasibility of golf and other recreational opportunities that can enhance sustainability of course
Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail	explore feasibility of trail west to Red Bud Isle

The **CENTRAL** combined planning area captures the majority of Austin's Urban Core. Dominated by residents aged 18-65 with small household sizes, it has the highest population & employment densities with healthy growth expected in both.

Individual Park Planning Areas

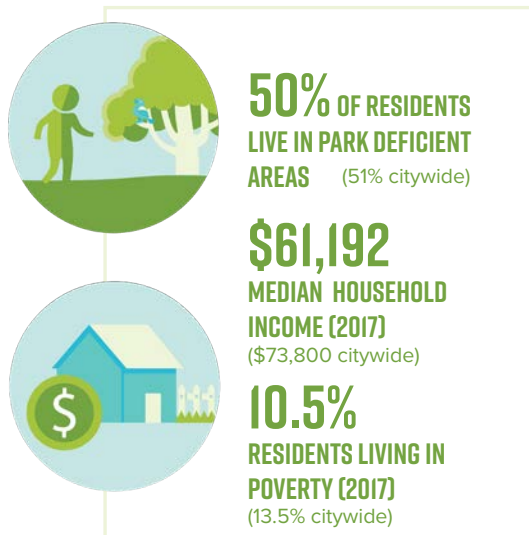


Note: Combined Planning Area Maps to be finalized

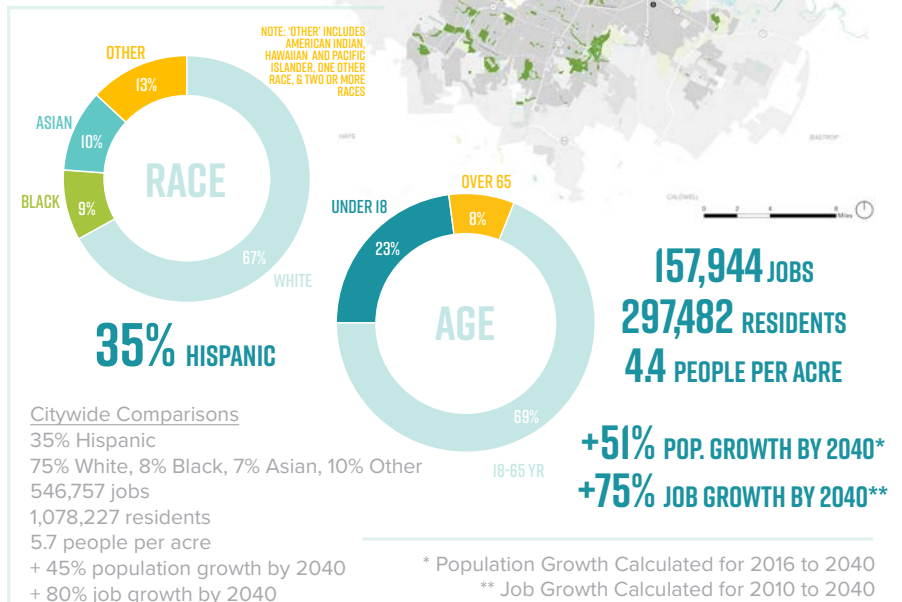
FIGURE 23. CENTRAL COMBINED PLANNING AREA MAP
Source: WRT.

NORTH

NORTH, AT A GLANCE



All "At A Glance" statistics are calculated using the 5 mile ETJ boundary NOT the City of Austin boundary.



TOP ISSUES

- + **Park provision alongside densification.** Neighborhoods in the north park planning areas have the second highest average density, after central planning areas, and nearly 300k residents. New growth is proposed or anticipated in centers (e.g., Domain, Apple Campus) providing an opportunity to expand access and amenities within new development.
- + **Increasing resident access to facilities.** While more residents live within walking distance of a park than in the central planning areas,

those parks in general have fewer amenities, such as natural trails and off-leash dog areas. Adding facilities to existing parks will be a key strategy. Several projects are already underway, and improvements are planned to increase amenities, including expanded access to greenbelts. Any new parkland should seek to strategically address facility needs.

- + **Extend the diverse, in-demand programs of the new recreation centers to other venues and facilities.** Two of Austin's recreation and community centers are located in the north park

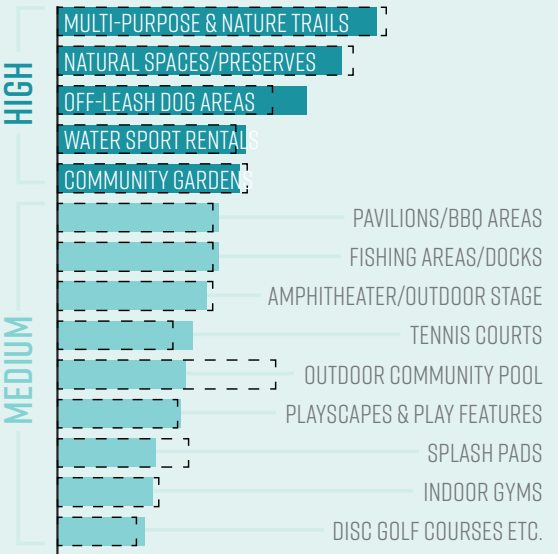
planning area with four more close to the south. While this is below the citywide average, these are two very high-performing rec centers with diverse offerings. The City of Austin/YMCA North Austin Community Recreation Center includes an expansive community garden and community gathering spaces while Gustavo "Gus" L. Garcia Recreation Center provides active recreation for residents including youth, teen, adult, and senior adult programs. These programs could be replicated at other existing park sites that currently have less access to recreation centers.

CURRENT & FUTURE NEEDS

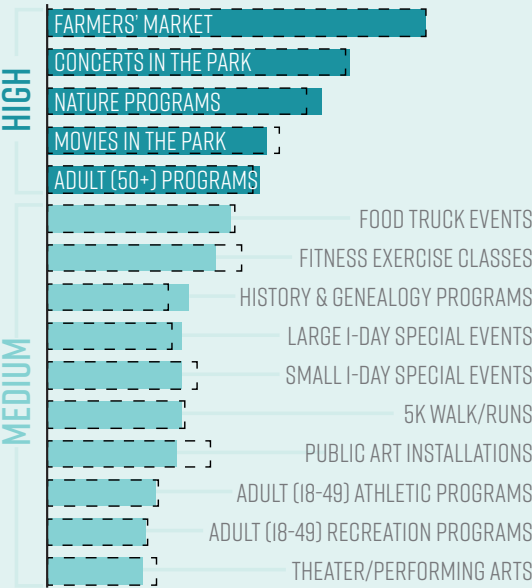
What We Heard

Feedback from surveys of north park planning area residents closely matched feedback from Austin residents as whole. Residents would like to see more trails and natural areas, as well as farmers’ markets, events (concerts, nature programs, movies in the park) and exercise programs in parks. There is higher demand for off-leash dog areas and canoe rental, compared to the city overall.

Facility & Amenity Priorities



Program Priorities



PRIORITIZATION PROCESS

Based on the statistically valid survey of residents of this Combined Planning Area, the priorities above have emerged in this ranked order (compared against the citywide prioritization of the same elements, depicted in the black dashed outline). The prioritization is intended as a guide and while new or niche activities may not rank high overall, PARD can consider opportunities for piloting or testing where opportunities arise (e.g., at Metro or District Parks).

Areas for Investment

Based on initial Level of Service guidelines, the following current and projected needs are expected up to 2034.

Parkland & Indoor Facilities

✓	GREENBELTS
✓	TRAILS
✓	POCKET PARKS
✓	NEIGHBORHOOD / SCHOOL PARKS
✓	DISTRICT PARKS
✓	METROPOLITAN PARKS
✓	SPECIAL USE PARKS / CEMETERIES
✓	RECREATION / COMMUNITY CENTER
✓	NATURE / ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER
✓	CULTURAL / ARTS CENTERS & MUSEUMS

Outdoor Amenities

+	Baseball Diamond (Teen/Adult)
+	Little League / Girls Fast Pitch Softball Diamond
+	Softball Diamond (Youth/Adult)
+	Rectangle Fields (Mixed Use)
+	Disc Golf Course (9 Hole)
+	Golf Course (18 Hole)
+	Playground
+	Off-Leash Dog Area
+	Tennis Court (Publicly Accessible)
+	Pickleball Court (Publicly Accessible)
+	Outdoor Basketball Court
+	Sand Volleyball Court
+	Reservable Picnic Shelters
+	Skate Park / BMX Bike
+	Rectangle Fields (Mixed-use, including soccer)

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

PARK DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION	
Asian American Resource Center	master plan implementation
Brownie Neighborhood Park	master plan implementation
Davis Spring Special Park	complete installation of disc golf course
Georgian Acres Neighborhood Park	master plan implementation
Gustavo “Gus” Garcia District Park and Recreation Center	develop outdoor recreation amenities
Harris Branch Neighborhood Park	Level 1 development
Northern Walnut Creek Greenbelt	enhance trail connections throughout (1) Phase 2 development of existing trail, (2) development of trail section from Balcones District Park to Yett Creek Neighborhood Park, and (3) development of trail connection to Brushy Creek Trail
Red Line Trail	continue trail development
Riata Neighborhood Park and Yett Creek Neighborhood Park	improve connections and implement better signage to connect parks to one another and to the surrounding neighborhood
Upper Bull Creek Greenbelt	develop trail
Walnut Creek Greenbelt	Phase 3 development of hike and bike trail
Work with AISD to implement parks at:	Pre-K Schools: <i>Dobie Prekindergarten Center</i>
	Elementary Schools: <i>Summitt, Davis, McBee, Barrington, Wooldridge, Graham, Cook, Hart, Walnut Creek, Guerrero Thompson</i>
	Middle Schools: <i>Dobie</i>
	High Schools: <i>Juan Navarro, Navarro Early College, Travis County Day School</i>

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS	
Quail Creek Neighborhood Park	upon completion of watershed protection department project, restore park

FEASIBILITY STUDIES	
Explore urban trail connections from Walnut Creek Trail to nearby PARD facilities (e.g., Gus Garcia Rec Center, AARC)	Study trail connection feasibility

ACQUISITIONS	
Janet Long Fish Park at Harris Branch Greenbelt	acquisition for connectivity
Robinson Branch PUD	implement land acquisition plan
Scofield Farms Neighborhood Park	acquisition and trail development
Walnut Creek Greenbelt	additional acquisitions and Phase 3 trail development
Walnut Creek Metro Park	acquisition to improve connectivity
Avery Ranch MUD/PUD	implement acquisition plan
North Burnet Gateway area	land acquisition and Level 1 development of pocket parks
E. of MoPac & S. of Wells Branch Pkwy	land acquisition and development of a pocket park or neighborhood park
New parkland within park deficient areas	

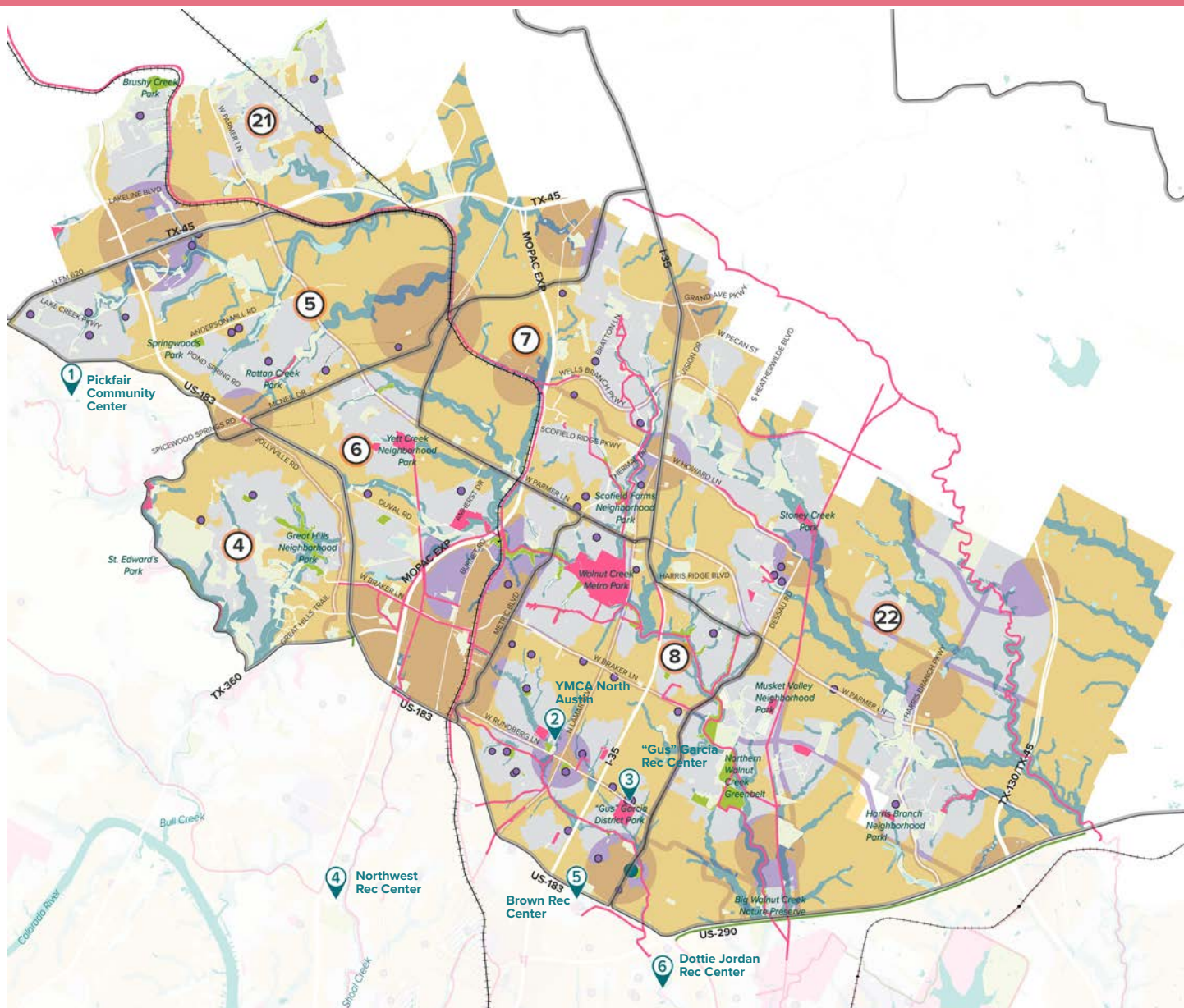
MASTER PLANNING	
Balcones District Park	master plan including Phase 1 development
Lakeline Neighborhood Park	master plan including Phase 1 development
Musket Valley Neighborhood Park	master plan including Phase 1 development
Oertli Neighborhood Park	master plan including Phase 1 development
Pioneer Crossing Neighborhood Park	master plan including Phase 1 development
Walnut Creek District Park	master plan including Phase 1 development
Walnut Creek Metropolitan Park	master plan including Phase 1 development

PARTNERSHIPS	
Austin Energy: Walnut Creek connectivity	work with Austin Energy to better connect Walnut Creek Metropolitan Park to the neighborhood to the south
Austin Parks Foundation	continue to collaborate with APF
GAVA	continue to collaborate with GAVA
Red Line Parkway Initiative	continue to collaborate with RLPI
Travis County: Gilleland Creek	coordinate with Travis County on acquisition and trail development

The **NORTH** combined planning area has the second highest population & employment densities in the city but is more racially diverse than Central with more youth and larger household sizes.

Individual Park Planning Areas

4 5 6 7 8 21 22



PARD Park-Deficient Area Layer

- More than 1/4 to 1/2 mile away from a PARD park
- Creek Buffer - Greenbelt Priority

Environmental Features

- Other Non-PARD Open Space
- Waterways

Urban Trails

- Existing Urban Trails
- Proposed Urban Trails

PARD Parks, Draft Recommendations

- Recommended park improvements
- Other PARD park (owned and/or maintained)

Population Change 2017-2040

- Population Projected to More than Double

Community Landmarks

- PARD Cultural Facility
- Schools

Transportation

- MetroRail Commuter Line (Existing/Under Construction)
- Other (non-passenger) Rail Lines

Imagine Austin Growth Framework

- Centers
- Corridors

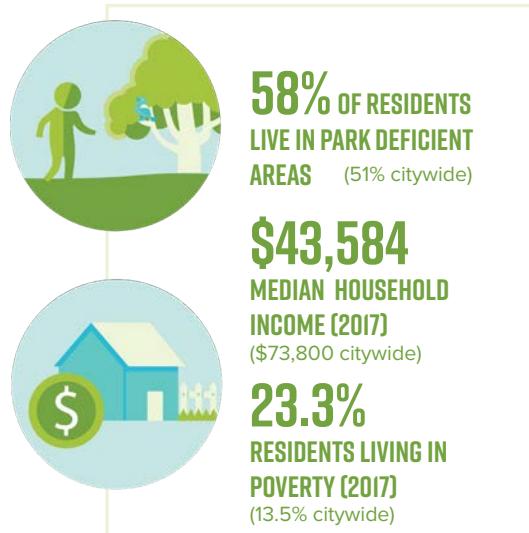
Note: Combined Planning Area Maps to be finalized

FIGURE 24. NORTH COMBINED PLANNING AREA MAP

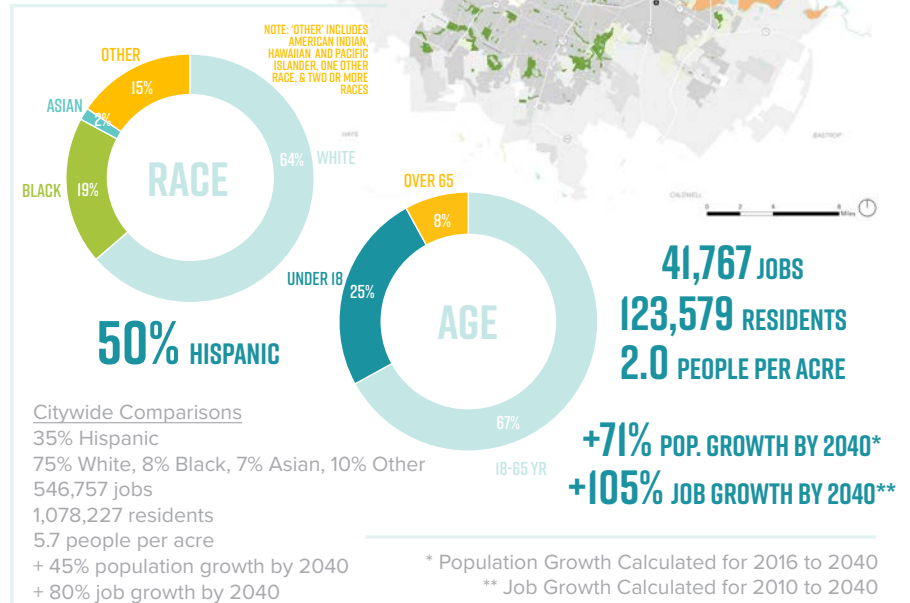
Source: WRT.

EAST

EAST, AT A GLANCE



All "At A Glance" statistics are calculated using the 5 mile ETJ boundary NOT the City of Austin boundary.



TOP ISSUES

- + **Access to existing wealth of facilities.** The number of facilities per capita is higher than other areas. The more urban areas west of US-183 include a high number of recreation and community centers, as well as the Carver Museum. Still, population is expected to grow, particularly in the urban core and employment is projected to increase by over 100% by 2040. Expanding multi-modal access to these facilities beyond the existing 42% will be a key way of preparing for growth.
- + **Higher rates of poverty and youth.** The poverty rate in the east planning

area is 23% and 25% of the population is under 18 years old. According to studies of gentrification risk, households within these planning areas are also at risk for continued displacement moving forward. Planned improvements in parks should be sensitive to the needs of current residents, including young adults and children. Programming should be focused on inclusivity and supporting paths out of poverty through education and health.

- + **New park improvements underway.** The Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park is a large regional park located

in east Austin, and a new master plan will guide future park improvements. In addition, a new master plan for development of the John Treviño Jr. Metropolitan Park is slated to begin in 2019.

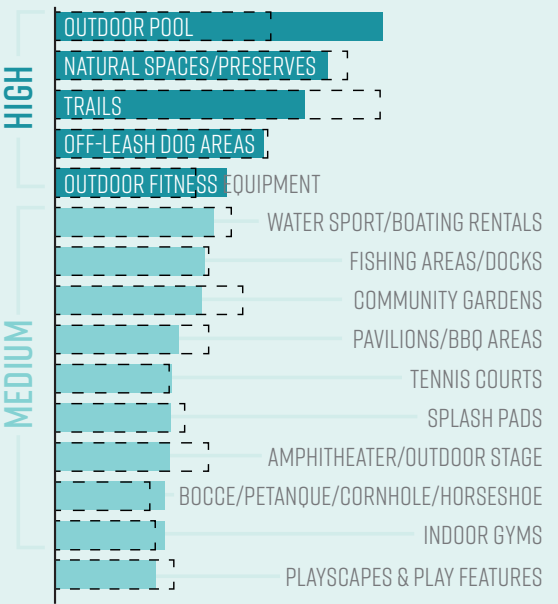
- + **Reflecting cultural diversity in parks.** The east planning areas benefits from one of the most racially diverse resident populations in Austin with a high percentage of Hispanic residents. Finding ways that the parks can reflect, support and celebrate this diversity through design, multilingual signage, facilities and programming should be a priority.

CURRENT & FUTURE NEEDS

What We Heard

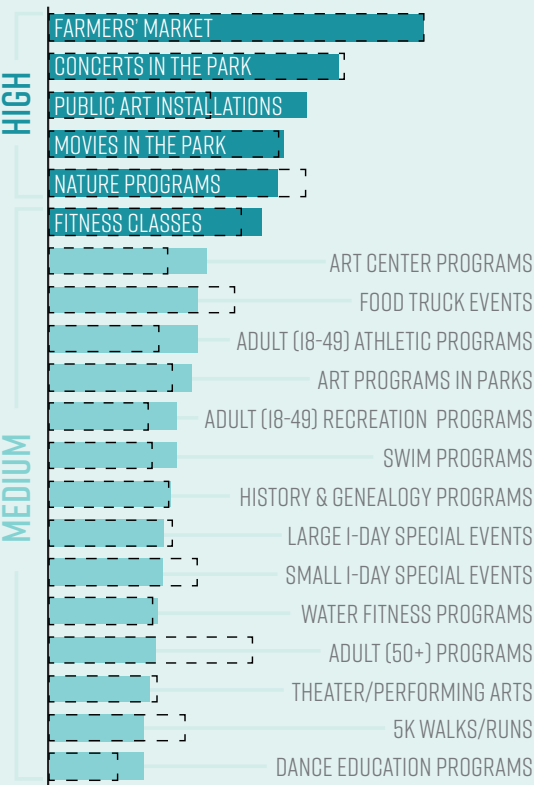
Feedback from surveys of the east park planning areas closely matched feedback from Austin residents as whole. However, residents did express a stronger preference for public art installations in parks, in addition to farmers’ markets and movies in the parks. Interest in outdoor pools also came out strongly, though the east planning areas have higher than the citywide average aquatic facilities per capita.

Facility & Amenity Priorities



PRIORITIZATION PROCESS
Based on the statistically valid survey of residents of this Combined Planning Area, the priorities above have emerged in this ranked order (compared against the citywide prioritization of the same elements, depicted in the black dashed outline). The prioritization is intended as a guide and while new or niche activities may not rank high overall, PARD can consider opportunities for piloting or testing where opportunities arise (e.g., at Metro or District Parks).

Program Priorities



Areas for Investment

Based on initial Level of Service guidelines, the following current and projected needs are expected up to 2034.

Parkland & Indoor Facilities

✓	GREENBELTS
✓	NATURE PRESERVES
✓	TRAILS
✓	POCKET PARKS
✓	NEIGHBORHOOD / SCHOOL PARKS
✓	DISTRICT PARKS
✓	SPECIAL USE PARKS / CEMETERIES
✓	RECREATION / COMMUNITY CENTER
✓	NATURE / ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER

Outdoor Amenities

- + Baseball Diamond (Teen/Adult)
- + Little League / Girls Fast Pitch Softball Diamond
- + Rectangle Fields (Mixed Use)
- + Playground
- + Off-Leash Dog Area
- + Pickleball Court (Publicly Accessible)
- + Sand Volleyball Court
- + Skate Park / BMX Bike
- + Rectangle Fields (Mixed-use, including soccer)

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

PARK DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION	
Bartholomew District Park	Phase 2 master plan implementation, including disc golf course upgrades, off-leash dog area, rehab fields
Colony Park District Park	develop park and pool
Comal Pocket Park	complete improvements to park
Conley-Guerrero Senior Activity Center	add outdoor pickleball courts on the side of the facility
Dottie Jordan Neighborhood Park	explore creek access
Edward Rendon Sr. Park at Festival Beach, Town Lake Metropolitan Park	implement Level 2 & 3 development consistent with master plan including Fiesta Gardens rehab
Givens District Park	Phase 2 & 3 implementation of adopted master plan
Holly Shores	develop recreational facilities consistent with the master plan
Little Walnut Creek Greenbelt	Level 1 development, Phase 1 master plan implementation
MLK Station Neighborhood Park	complete initial phase of park development
Morris Williams Golf Course	develop trail on the edge of Morris Williams
Patterson Neighborhood Park	implement vision plan, explore Pharr tennis center
Pharr Tennis Center	renovate courts and concession building
Rosewood Neighborhood Park	complete installation of new restroom/bathhouse to service park
Springdale Neighborhood Park	continue Level 1 & 2 development
Walnut Creek Sports Park	design and implement sports facility (tennis, softball, baseball, soccer)
Work with AISD to implement parks at:	Elementary Schools: <i>Pickle, Children's Medical Center, Harris, Maplewood, Pecan Springs, Winn, Andrews, Blanton, Govalle, Metz, Oak Springs, Ortega, Sanchez, Sims, Allan, Zavala, Norman, Blackshear, Campbell, Brooke, Jordan, Overton</i>
	Middle Schools: <i>Pearce, Kealing, Martin, Garcia, School For Young Men</i>
	Middle & High Schools: <i>School For Young Women</i>
	High Schools: <i>Garza Independence, International, Lasa, LBJ, Eastside Memorial at The Johnston Campus; Northeast</i>

PARTNERSHIPS	
Austin Parks Foundation	continue to collaborate with APF
Travis County: Gilleland Creek	complete park agreement between Travis County and PARD
Mueller Development Perimeter Parks & Greenbelts	complete Parkland Improvement Agreement (PIA) and maintenance agreement between COA and Mueller for 140 of parkland being added through this public-private partnership
Red Line Parkway Initiative	continue to collaborate

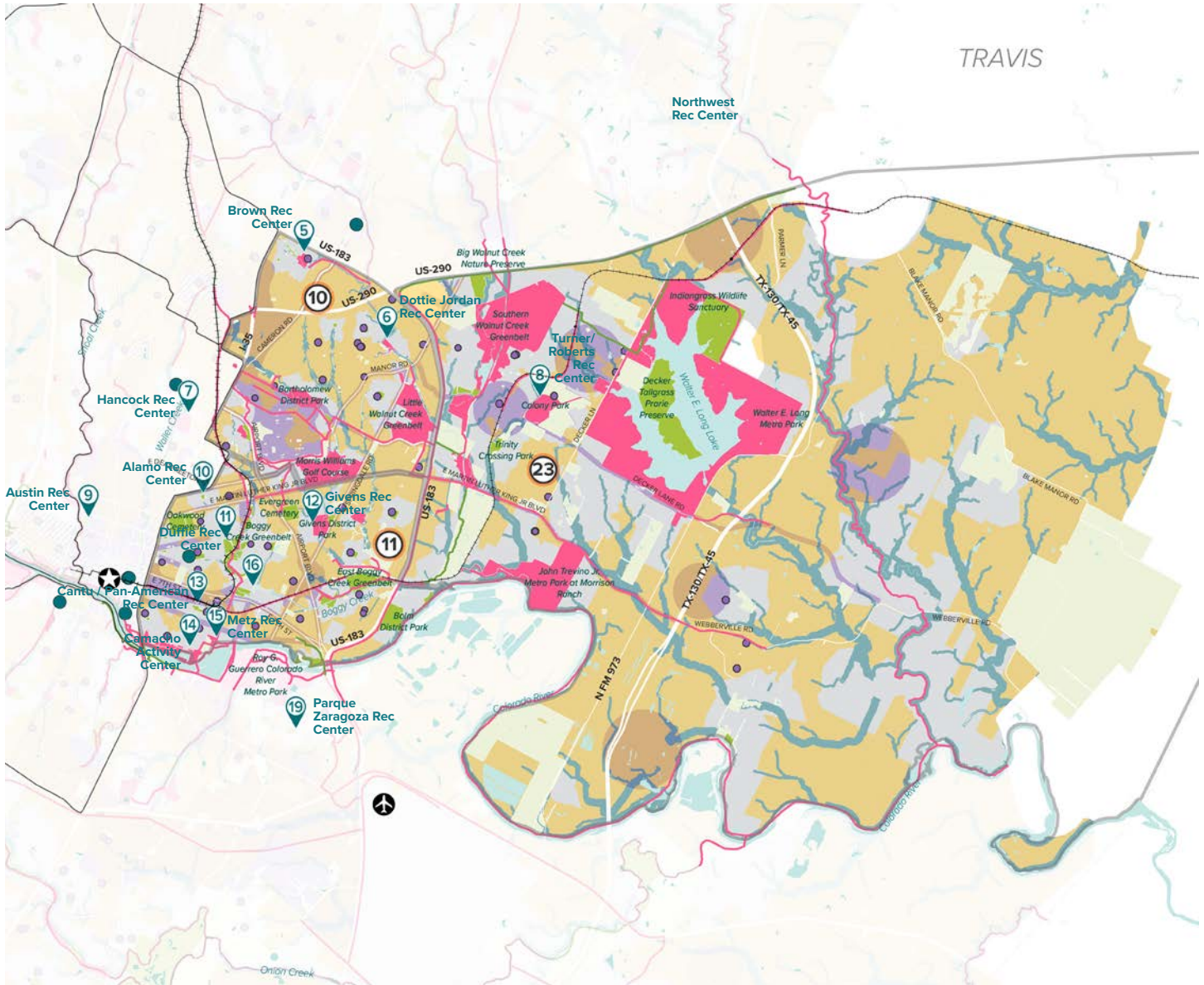
ACQUISITIONS	
Agave Neighborhood Park & Colony Park District Park	acquisition for connectivity
Colony Park District Park & John Trevino Metro Park	acquisition for connectivity
Mueller Perimeter Parks & Greenbelts	complete transfer of parkland to PARD from Mueller
Dottie Jordan Neighborhood Park	improve neighborhood connectivity
Mueller Lake Park	improve neighborhood connectivity
Springdale Neighborhood Park	improve neighborhood connectivity
Walnut Creek Greenbelt	continue land acquisition
MLK Transit Oriented Development (TOD)	acquire land for neighborhood or pocket parks
MLK Blvd and Ed Bluestein Blvd	acquire land for neighborhood or pocket parks in a way that is consistent with the MLK TOD Regulating Plan
Along Colorado River	acquisition for connectivity
Along Fort Branch Creek	acquisition for connectivity
East of I-35, South of 290 and West of Cameron Rd	acquire land for neighborhood or pocket parks
New parkland within park deficient areas	

MASTER PLANNING	
Bolm District Park	master plan including Level 1 development
Buttermilk Neighborhood Park	master plan including Level 1 development
George Washington Carver Museum	master plan including Level 1 development
John Trevino Jr Metropolitan Park at Morrison Ranch	master plan including Level 1 development
Schieffer Tract	master plan including Level 1 development
Walnut Creek Metropolitan Park	design and implement sports facility (tennis, softball, baseball, soccer)
Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park	master plan including Level 1 development

The **EAST** combined planning area has one of the lowest population densities with the highest proportion of black residents, highest poverty rate and a higher youth population. It also has the highest projected population growth and substantial expected job growth.

Individual Park Planning Areas

10 11 23



PARD Park-Deficient Area Layer

- More than 1/4 to 1/2 mile away from a PARD park
- Creek Buffer - Greenbelt Priority

Environmental Features

- Other Non-PARD Open Space
- Waterways

Urban Trails

- Existing Urban Trails
- Proposed Urban Trails

PARD Parks, Draft Recommendations

- Recommended park improvements
- Other PARD park (owned and/or maintained)

Population Change 2017-2040

- Population Projected to More than Double

Community Landmarks

- PARD Cultural Facility
- Schools

Transportation

- MetroRail Commuter Line (Existing/Under Construction)
- Other (non-passenger) Rail Lines

- Downtown Austin
- Airport

Note: Combined Planning Area Maps to be finalized

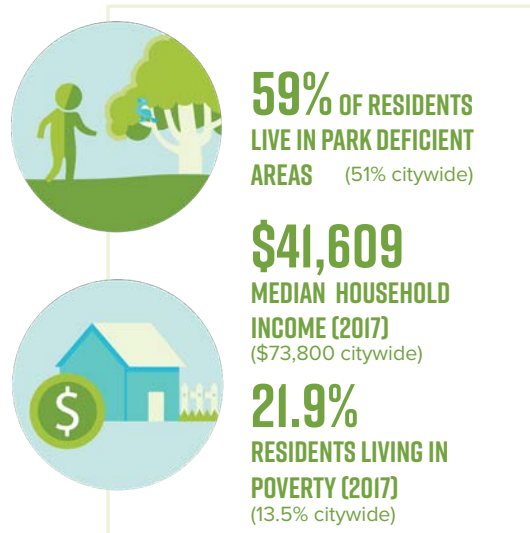
Imagine Austin Growth Framework

- Centers
- Corridors

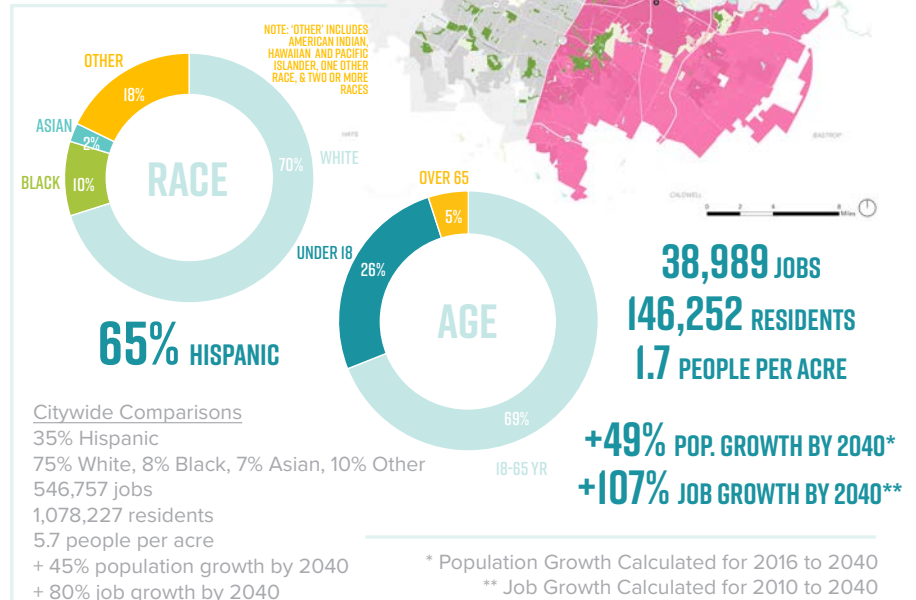
FIGURE 25. EAST COMBINED PLANNING AREA MAP
Source: WRT.

SOUTHEAST

SOUTHEAST, AT A GLANCE



All "At A Glance" statistics are calculated using the 5 mile ETJ boundary NOT the City of Austin boundary.



TOP ISSUES

- + **Expanding access despite low population density.** The southeast planning areas include a mix of neighborhoods and communities with varying levels of density and development. Residents have relatively high access to nature trails and natural areas, however some areas are lacking in several types of active and passive recreation facilities as well as community gardens and cultural facilities.
- + **Higher rates of poverty with large youth population.** The poverty rate in the southeast planning area is 22% with

26% of the population under 18 years old. According to studies of gentrification, households are also at risk for displacement as Austin continues to grow. Planned improvements in parks should be sensitive to the needs of current residents, including young adults and children. Programming should be focused on inclusivity and supporting paths out of poverty through education and health.

- + **Lack of cultural facilities.** Performance venues, historic sites, cultural / community centers are lacking, as compared to Austin as whole. Any future expansion

of cultural facilities and programming should reflect, support and celebrate the racial diversity and high percentage of Hispanic residents in this area.

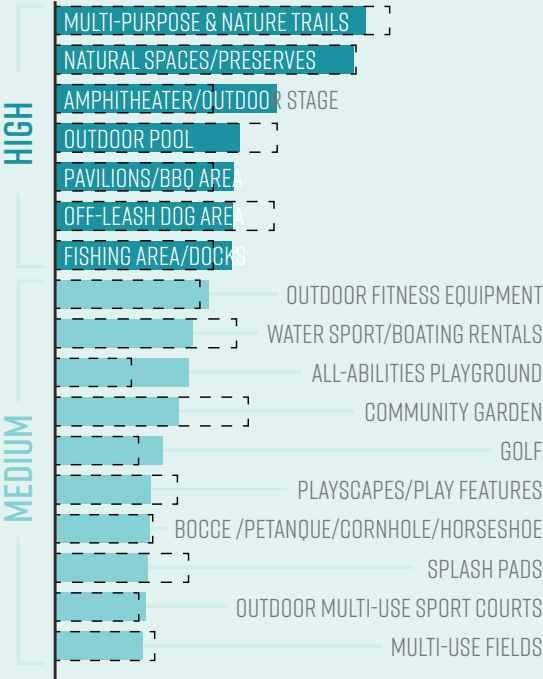
- + **Leverage creek buffers as open space opportunity.** Improvements are underway at Onion Creek Metro Park and the many environmentally sensitive areas along creeks provide opportunity for increased natural areas and greenbelts in the southeast.

CURRENT & FUTURE NEEDS

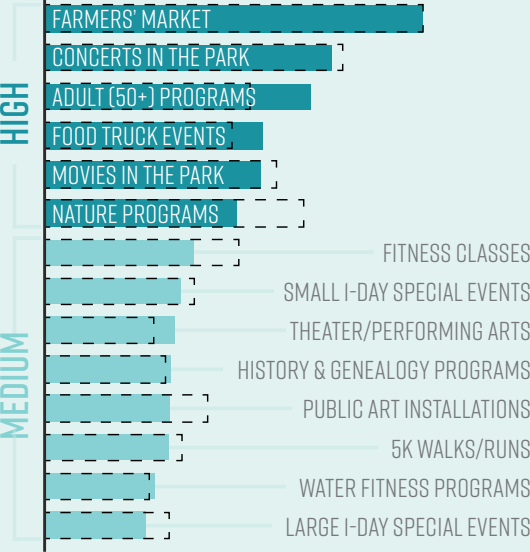
What We Heard

Feedback from surveys of the southeast park planning areas closely matched feedback from Austin residents as whole. However, residents did express a stronger preference for adult (Over 50) activities, as well as food trucks, outdoor amphitheater, and pavilions / BBQ area in comparison to Austin.

Facility & Amenity Priorities



Program Priorities



PRIORITIZATION PROCESS

Based on the statistically valid survey of residents of this Combined Planning Area, the priorities above have emerged in this ranked order (compared against the citywide prioritization of the same elements, depicted in the black dashed outline). The prioritization is intended as a guide and while new or niche activities may not rank high overall, PARD can consider opportunities for piloting or testing where opportunities arise (e.g., at Metro or District Parks).

Areas for Investment

Based on initial Level of Service guidelines, the following current and projected needs are expected up to 2034.

Parkland & Indoor Facilities

✓	GREENBELTS
✓	NATURE PRESERVES
✓	TRAILS
✓	POCKET PARKS
✓	NEIGHBORHOOD / SCHOOL PARKS
✓	DISTRICT PARKS
✓	SPECIAL USE PARKS / CEMETERIES
✓	RECREATION / COMMUNITY CENTER
✓	NATURE / ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER

Outdoor Amenities

- + Baseball Diamond (Teen/Adult)
- + Little League / Girls Fast Pitch Softball Diamond
- + Playground
- + Off-Leash Dog Area
- + Tennis Court (Publicly Accessible)
- + Pickleball Court (Publicly Accessible)
- + Outdoor Basketball Court
- + Sand Volleyball Court
- + Reservable Picnic Shelters

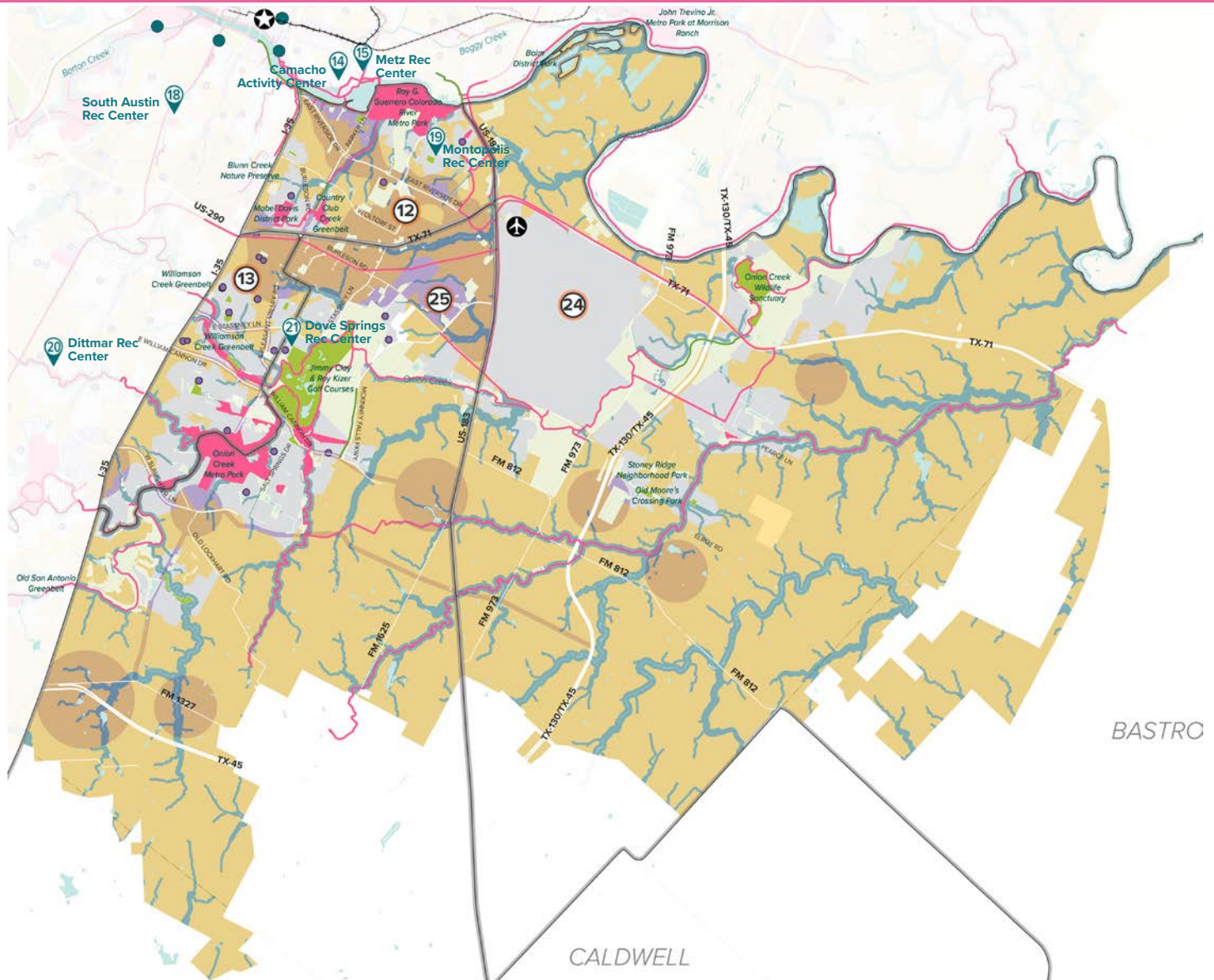
SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

PARK DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION			
Clay and Kizer Golf Complex	complete improvements to courses		
Marble Creek Greenbelt	trail development, improve access and parking (at William Cannon and Salt Spring Dr. intersection)		
Montopolis Neighborhood Park	complete construction of new Recreation and Community Center, athletic field improvements		
Onion Creek Metropolitan Park	implement the park development plan for phases 2 & 3		
Roy G. Guerrero Colorado River Metropolitan Park	implement future phases of master plan		
Work with AISD to implement parks at:	Elementary Schools: <i>Linder, Allison, Rodriguez, Houston, Langford, Perez, Casey, Cowan, Williams, Kocurek, Mills, Patton, Sunset Valley, Boone, Palm, Widen</i>	Middle Schools: <i>Mendez, Bedichek, Paredes, Small, Covington, Gorzycki</i>	High Schools: <i>Bowie</i>
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS			
Country Club Creek	coordinate with Watersheds and FEMA to replace the bridge and stabilize channel		
PARTNERSHIPS			
Austin Parks Foundation	continue to collaborate with APF		
Ecology Action	trail connections from Guerrero Metro Park to Montopolis School		
GAVA	continue to collaborate with GAVA		
The Trail Foundation	Implement master plans in collaboration with The Trail Foundation		
ACQUISITIONS			
Civitan Neighborhood Park	acquisition for connectivity		
Roy G Guerrero Metro Park & Mabel Davis District Park	acquisition for connectivity		
South Boggy Creek Greenbelt & Onion Creek Metropolitan Park	acquire parkland and improved trail connection		
Williamson Creek Greenbelt & Onion Creek Greenbelt	acquire parkland and improved trail connection		
Along Colorado River	acquisition for connectivity		
Along North and South Dry Creek Greenbelts	acquisition for connectivity including trail development		
Austin Water Utility property at William Cannon and Onion Creek			
New parkland in park deficient areas			
MASTER PLANNING			
Civitan Neighborhood Park Master Plan	including rehabilitation		
Grand Meadow Neighborhood Park	master plan and Level 1 development		
Montopolis School Master Plan	including improvements		
Williamson Creek Greenbelt	develop vision or concept plan		
FEASIBILITY STUDIES			
Mabel Davis District Park	potential to expand the existing skate park without compromising the landfill cap		
Maintenance Facility	potential to relocate, reinvest and/or build new		

The **SOUTHEAST** combined planning area has the highest proportion of Hispanic residents and the second highest poverty rate along with the second highest youth population. Healthy population growth and substantial job growth is expected here.

Individual Park Planning Areas

12 13 24 25



PARD Park-Deficient Area Layer

- More than 1/4 to 1/2 mile away from a PARD park
- Creek Buffer - Greenbelt Priority

Environmental Features

- Other Non-PARD Open Space
- Waterways

Urban Trails

- Existing Urban Trails
- Proposed Urban Trails

PARD Parks, Draft Recommendations

- Recommended park improvements
- Other PARD park (owned and/or maintained)

Population Change 2017-2040

- Population Projected to More than Double

Community Landmarks

- PARD Cultural Facility
- Schools

Transportation

- MetroRail Commuter Line (Existing/Under Construction)
- Other (non-passenger) Rail Lines

- Downtown Austin

- Airport

Note: Combined Planning Area Maps to be finalized

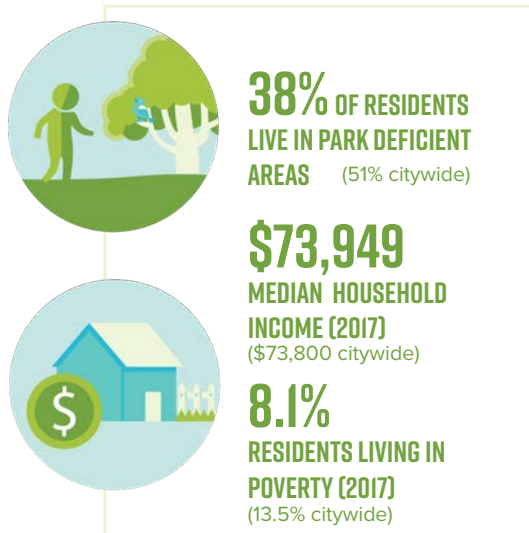
Imagine Austin Growth Framework

- Centers
- Corridors

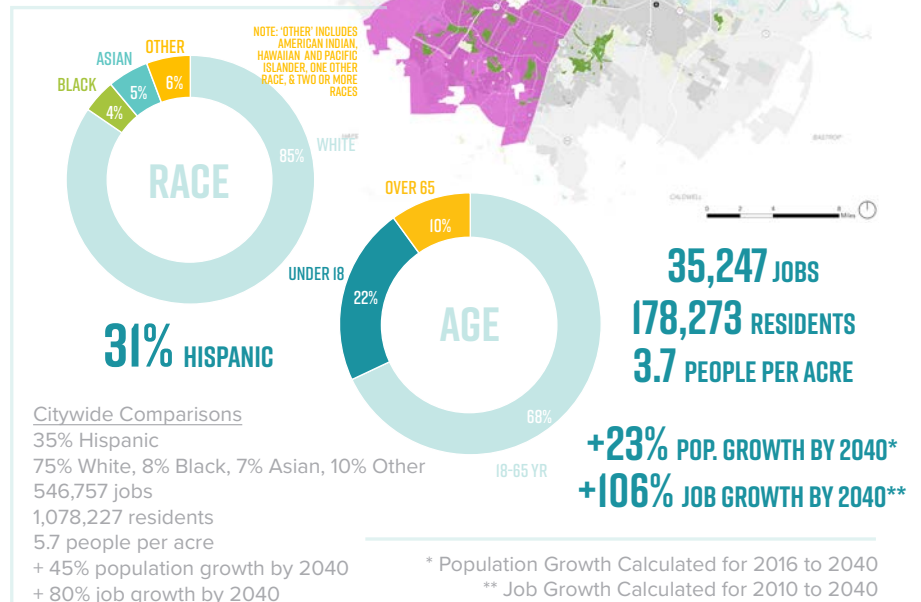
FIGURE 26. SOUTHEAST COMBINED PLANNING AREA MAP
Source: WRT.

SOUTHWEST

SOUTHWEST, AT A GLANCE



All "At A Glance" statistics are calculated using the 5 mile ETJ boundary NOT the City of Austin boundary.



TOP ISSUES

+ **Leverage high access to parks.** About 62% of residents are within walking distance of park. While the number of natural areas per capita is high, access to nature trails and community gardens along with several passive, active, and cultural facilities is below average or low in the southwest planning areas. Selectively adding these facilities to existing parks could be an important strategy moving forward.

+ **Lower rates of poverty with large youth population.** The average poverty rate in the southwest planning

areas is 8% with 22% of the population under the age of 18 years old. Families may have greater access to private programming and recreational activities. The full range of facilities may not be wanted or needed in parks if structured private offerings are meeting that need - if this is the case, it may be appropriate for parks to have more limited facilities with an emphasis on unstructured multi-purpose natural and social spaces to complement private offerings.

+ **Lack of Recreation / Cultural Centers.** Recreation centers are limited in the southwest planning areas. Performance

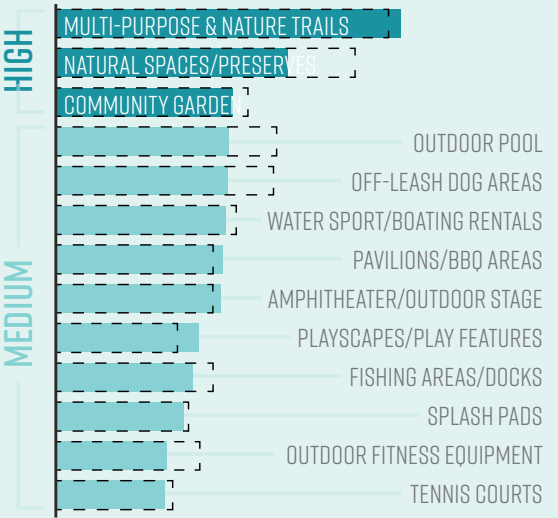
venues, historic sites, cultural / community centers are lacking, as compared to Austin as whole.

CURRENT & FUTURE NEEDS

What We Heard

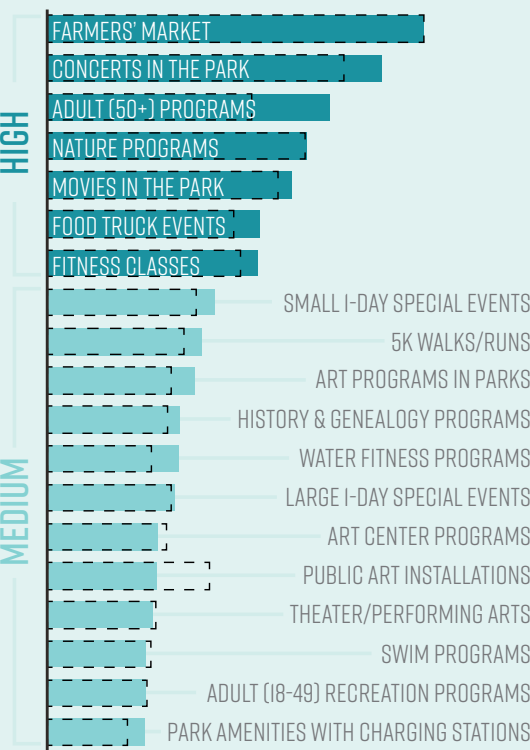
Feedback from surveys of the southwest park planning areas closely matched feedback from Austin residents as whole. However, residents did express a stronger preference for concerts in the park and adult (Over 50) activities.

Facility & Amenity Priorities



PRIORITIZATION PROCESS
Based on the statistically valid survey of residents of this Combined Planning Area, the priorities above have emerged in this ranked order (compared against the citywide prioritization of the same elements, depicted in the black dashed outline). The prioritization is intended as a guide and while new or niche activities may not rank high overall, PARD can consider opportunities for piloting or testing where opportunities arise (e.g., at Metro or District Parks).

Program Priorities



Areas for Investment

Based on initial Level of Service guidelines, the following current and projected needs are expected up to 2034.

Parkland & Indoor Facilities

✓	GREENBELTS
✓	NATURE PRESERVES
✓	TRAILS
✓	POCKET PARKS
✓	NEIGHBORHOOD / SCHOOL PARKS
✓	DISTRICT PARKS
✓	SPECIAL USE PARKS / CEMETERIES
✓	RECREATION / COMMUNITY CENTER

Outdoor Amenities

+	Baseball Diamond (Teen/Adult)
+	Little League / Girls Fast Pitch Softball Diamond
+	Softball Diamond (Youth/Adult)
+	Rectangle Fields (Mixed Use)
+	Playground
+	Off-Leash Dog Area
+	Tennis Court (Publicly Accessible)
+	Pickleball Court (Publicly Accessible)
+	Outdoor Basketball Court
+	Sand Volleyball Court
+	Reservable Picnic Shelters
+	Skate Park / BMX Bike

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

PARK DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION			
AB Dittmar Neighborhood Park	improve athletic fields		
Circle C Ranch at Slaughter Creek Metropolitan Park	implement Violet Crown Trail w/Hill Country Conservancy		
Grey Rock Golf and Tennis	expansion of tennis center		
Latta Branch Greenbelt	park trail development where feasible		
Onion Creek Greenbelt	trail development from Old San Antonio District Park to IH 35		
Slaughter Creek Greenbelt	renovate the historic Matthew Brown House and make it available for concession, develop trail between Mary Moore Searight Metropolitan Park and IH 35		
South Austin Recreation Center	improve the 2 and implement trail plan		
Work with AISD to implement parks at:	Elementary Schools: <i>Pleasant Hill, Cunningham, Joslin, St Elmo, Odom, Branoff, Menchaca, Clayton, Kiker, Baldwin</i>	Middle Schools: <i>Bailey</i>	High Schools: <i>Crockett, Akins</i>

PARTNERSHIPS	
Austin Parks Foundation	continue to collaborate with APF
Austin Water and Watershed Protection	trail development and public access
Hill Country Conservancy	continue to partner to develop the Violet Crown Trail

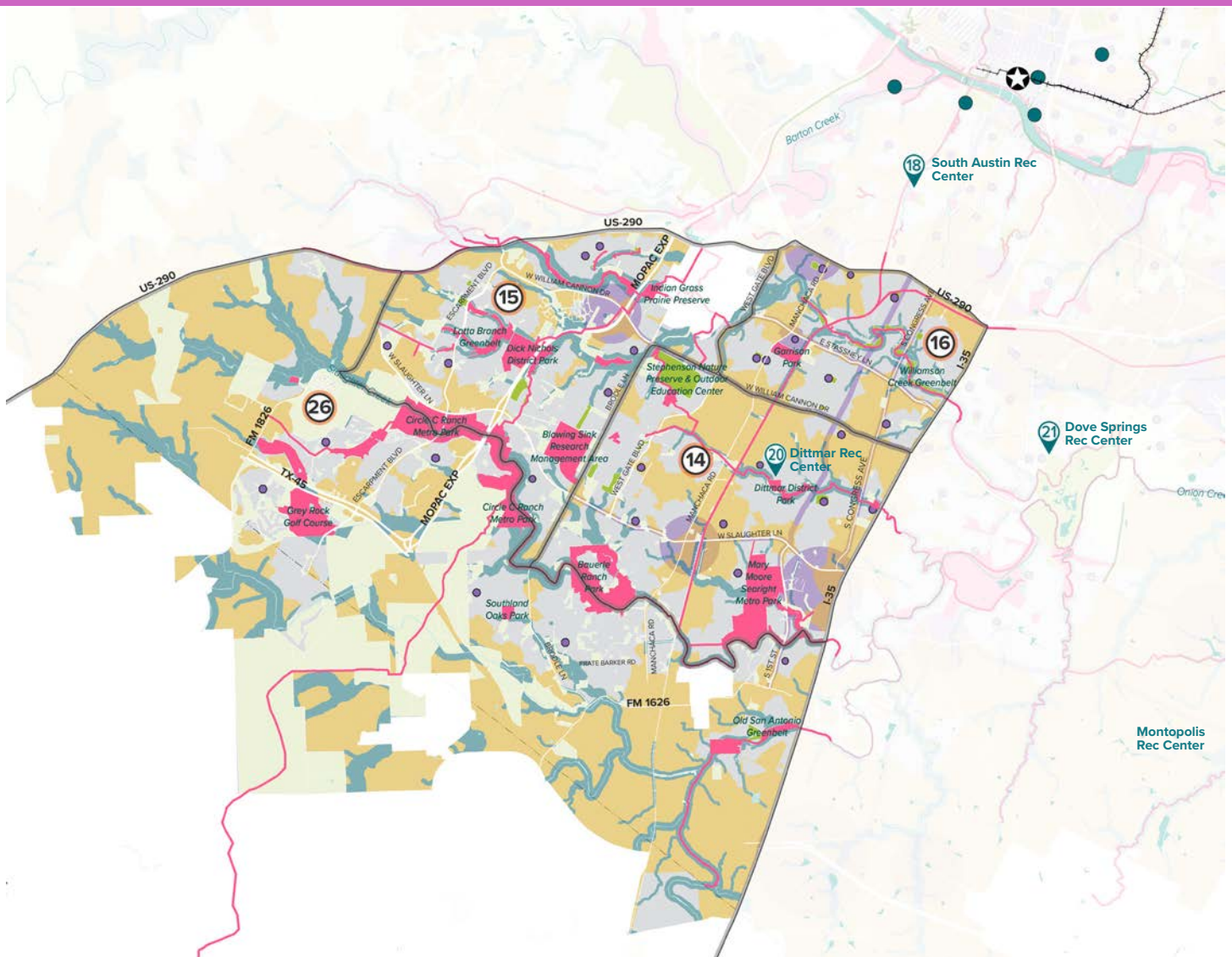
PROGRAMMING	
Blowing Sink Research Management Area	explore opportunity for nature center or nature education

ACQUISITIONS	
Onion Creek Greenbelt	continue acquisition
Slaughter Creek Greenbelt	acquisition and trail development
South Boggy Creek Greenbelt	acquire land along creek
Violet Crown Trail	transfer Convict Hill Austin Energy property to PARD for trail
Williamson Creek Greenbelt	acquisition and trail development
Oak Hill Area	acquire and develop land as a destination park
Bergstrom spur	support the acquisition for Bergstrom spur to develop pocket parks at neighborhood connections
New parkland within park deficient areas	

MASTER PLANNING	
Bauerle Ranch at Slaughter Creek Greenbelt	develop a vision or concept plan, including soccer fields and parking
Circle C Ranch at Slaughter Creek Metropolitan Park	update or develop new master plan
Davis Hill Neighborhood Park	concept plan and development
Dick Nichols District Park	master plan update
Garrison District Park	master plan
Longview Neighborhood Park	concept plan and development
Mary Moore Searight Metropolitan Park	master plan and include implementation of priority projects
Old San Antonio Greenbelt	master plan
Southland Oaks Neighborhood Park	develop a vision or concept plan
Williamson Creek Greenbelt	develop a master plan

The **SOUTHWEST** combined planning area has mid-level population and employment densities with minimal population growth but substantial employment growth expected and the highest proportion of white residents.

14 15 16 26



PARD Park-Deficient Area Layer

- More than 1/4 to 1/2 mile away from a PARD park
- Creek Buffer - Greenbelt Priority

Environmental Features

- Other Non-PARD Open Space
- Waterways

Urban Trails

- Existing Urban Trails
- Proposed Urban Trails

PARD Parks, Draft Recommendations

- Recommended park improvements
- Other PARD park (owned and/or maintained)

Population Change 2017-2040

- Population Projected to More than Double

Community Landmarks

- PARD Cultural Facility
- Schools

Transportation

- MetroRail Commuter Line (Existing/Under Construction)
- Other (non-passenger) Rail Lines

- Downtown Austin
- Airport

Note: Combined Planning Area Maps to be finalized

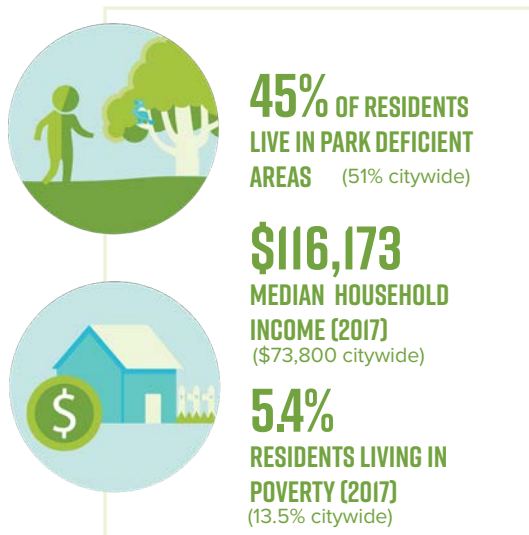
Imagine Austin Growth Framework

- Centers
- Corridors

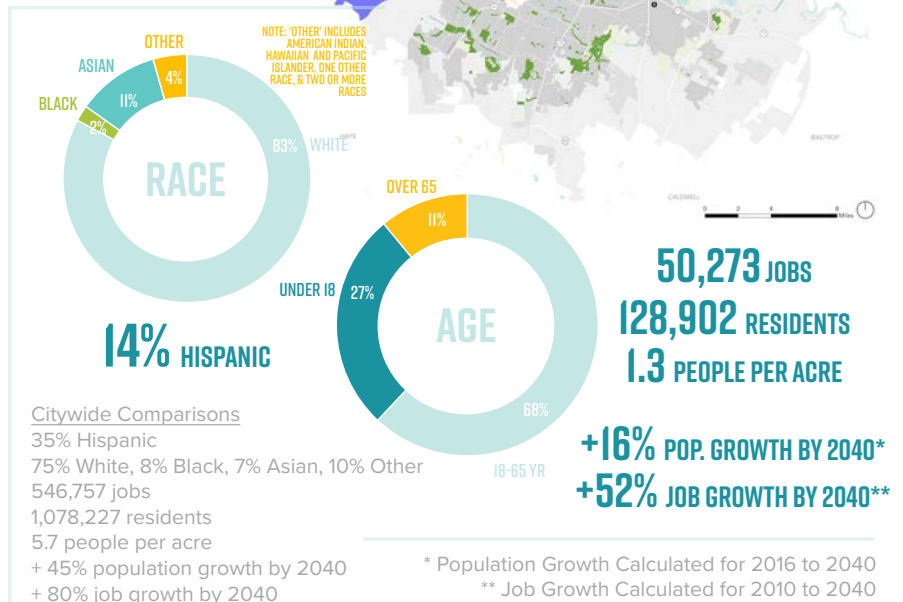
FIGURE 27. SOUTHWEST COMBINED PLANNING AREA MAP
Source: WRT.

WEST

WEST, AT A GLANCE



All "At A Glance" statistics are calculated using the 5 mile ETJ boundary NOT the City of Austin boundary.



TOP ISSUES

+ **Leverage high access to parks.** About 55% of residents are within walking distance of park. Nature trails, water features, and community gardens are limited, while natural areas are higher than the city average. The western planning areas are lucky to be home to Zilker Park and benefit from the highest off-leash dog areas per capita compared to Austin as a whole. Selectively adding facilities may make the existing parks more valuable to residents already living nearby.

+ **Lower rates of poverty with large youth population.** The average poverty rate in the west planning areas is 5% with 27% of the population under the age of 18 years old. Families may have greater access to private programming and recreational activities. The full range of facilities may not be wanted or needed in parks if structured private offerings are meeting that need - if this is the case, it may be appropriate for parks to have more limited facilities with an emphasis on unstructured multi-purpose natural and social spaces to complement private offerings.

+ **Natural areas & disconnected development.** Some of the lowest densities and population projections are found in the western planning areas. Sensitive environmental features and physical boundaries play a role in development patterns in the western planning areas.

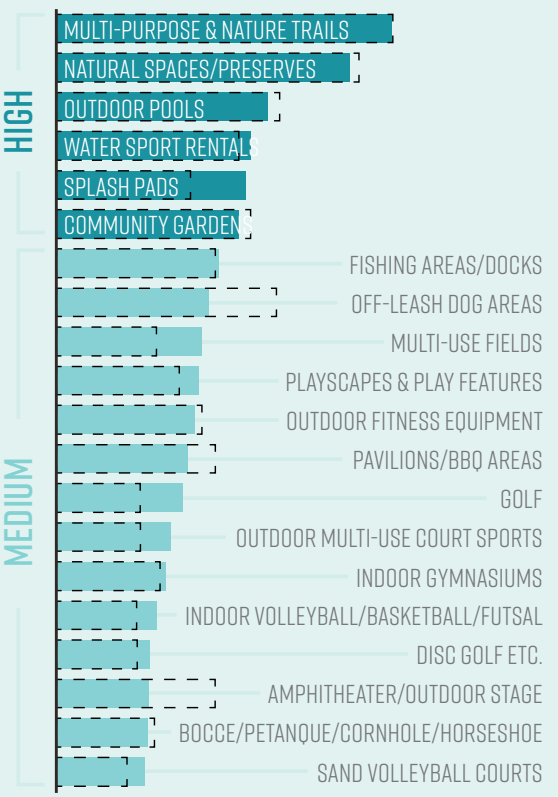
+ **Multi-modal park access.** Additional effort may be required to make parks more accessible by foot, bike and scooter due to the low densities and low population projections in this area. Parking needs may also be higher than average.

CURRENT & FUTURE NEEDS

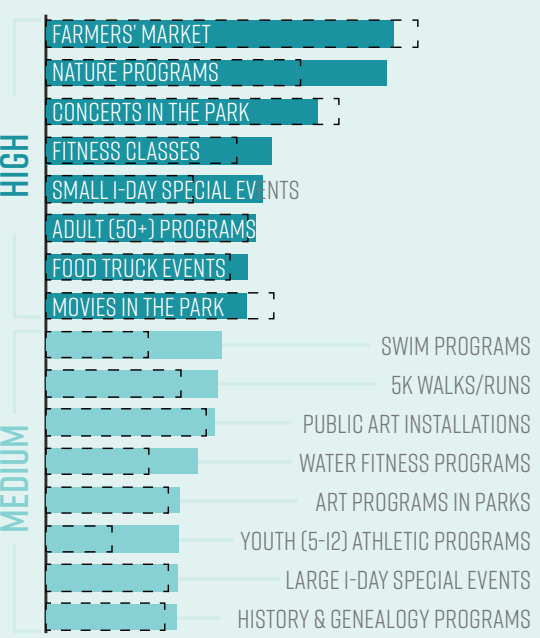
What We Heard

Feedback from surveys of the west park planning areas closely matched feedback from Austin residents as whole. However, residents did express a stronger preference for nature programs and group fitness.

Facility & Amenity Priorities



Program Priorities



PRIORITIZATION PROCESS
Based on the statistically valid survey of residents of this Combined Planning Area, the priorities above have emerged in this ranked order (compared against the citywide prioritization of the same elements, depicted in the black dashed outline). The prioritization is intended as a guide and while new or niche activities may not rank high overall, PARD can consider opportunities for piloting or testing where opportunities arise (e.g., at Metro or District Parks).

Areas for Investment

Based on initial Level of Service guidelines, the following current and projected needs are expected up to 2034.

Parkland & Indoor Facilities

✓	GREENBELTS
✓	NATURE PRESERVES
✓	TRAILS
✓	POCKET PARKS
✓	NEIGHBORHOOD / SCHOOL PARKS
✓	DISTRICT PARKS
✓	RECREATION / COMMUNITY CENTER
✓	NATURE / ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER

Outdoor Amenities

- + Baseball Diamond (Teen/Adult)
- + Little League / Girls Fast Pitch Softball Diamond
- + Softball Diamond (Youth/Adult)
- + Playground
- + Off-Leash Dog Area
- + Pickleball Court (Publicly Accessible)
- + Reservable Picnic Shelters
- + Skate Park / BMX Bike

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

PARK DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION	
Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail	improvements at narrow spots (west of Lou Neff to MoPac)
Barton Creek Greenbelt	improve access and parking
Bull Creek District Park	trail development and repair
Bull Creek Greenbelt	trail development and repair
Emma Long Metropolitan Park	development as indicated in Master Plan
Red Bud Isle	improve kayak launch and bridge, explore expansion to the north of Red Bud Trail Rd, work with LCRA to ensure safe, walkable access to Red Bud
St. Edward's Greenbelt	improve access, parking and trailhead
Zilker Metropolitan Park	upgrade and improve site conditions at Zilker Clubhouse, continue Zilker Loop Trail development and Barton Creek Crossing upstream from pool; construct loop trail extension and bridge; master plan implementation
Work with AISD to implement parks at:	Elementary Schools: <i>Oak Hill Elementary School</i>

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS	
Colorado River	bank stabilization
Barton Creek Greenbelt	work with watershed to complete bank stabilization

PARTNERSHIPS	
Austin Parks Foundation	continue to collaborate with APF
Barton Springs Conservancy	continue to collaborate with BSC
Travis Audubon	explore birding education at Commons Ford Metro Park
Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy	continue to collaborate

ACQUISITIONS	
Barton Creek Greenbelt	continue acquisition
Eagle's Nest Park	acquisition for connectivity
Gaines Creek Greenbelt	acquisition and park trail development
Upper Bull Creek Greenbelt	acquisition and park trail development
Williamson Creek Greenbelt	continue land acquisition
Oak Hill Area	new parkland for development of a destination park, park trail corridor acquisition and development
Acquire land in park deficient areas for pocket and neighborhood parks	

MASTER PLANNING	
Commons Ford Ranch Metropolitan Park	master plan and rehabilitate shoreline and roads
St. Edwards Greenbelt	develop vision or concept plan
Zilker Metropolitan Park	including Zilker Botanical Garden and Austin Nature & Science Center

The **WEST** combined planning area has the lowest population and employment densities, with minimal growth expected and has a the highest proportion of both senior residents and youth.

18 19 20

Urban Trails

- Existing Urban Trails
- Proposed Urban Trails

PARD Parks, Draft Recommendations

- Recommended park improvements
- Other PARD park (owned and/or maintained)

Imagine Austin Growth Framework

- Centers
- Corridors

PARD Park-Deficient Area Layer

- More than 1/4 to 1/2 mile away from a PARD park
- Creek Buffer - Greenbelt Priority

Environmental Features

- Other Non-PARD Open Space
- Waterways

Population Change 2017-2040

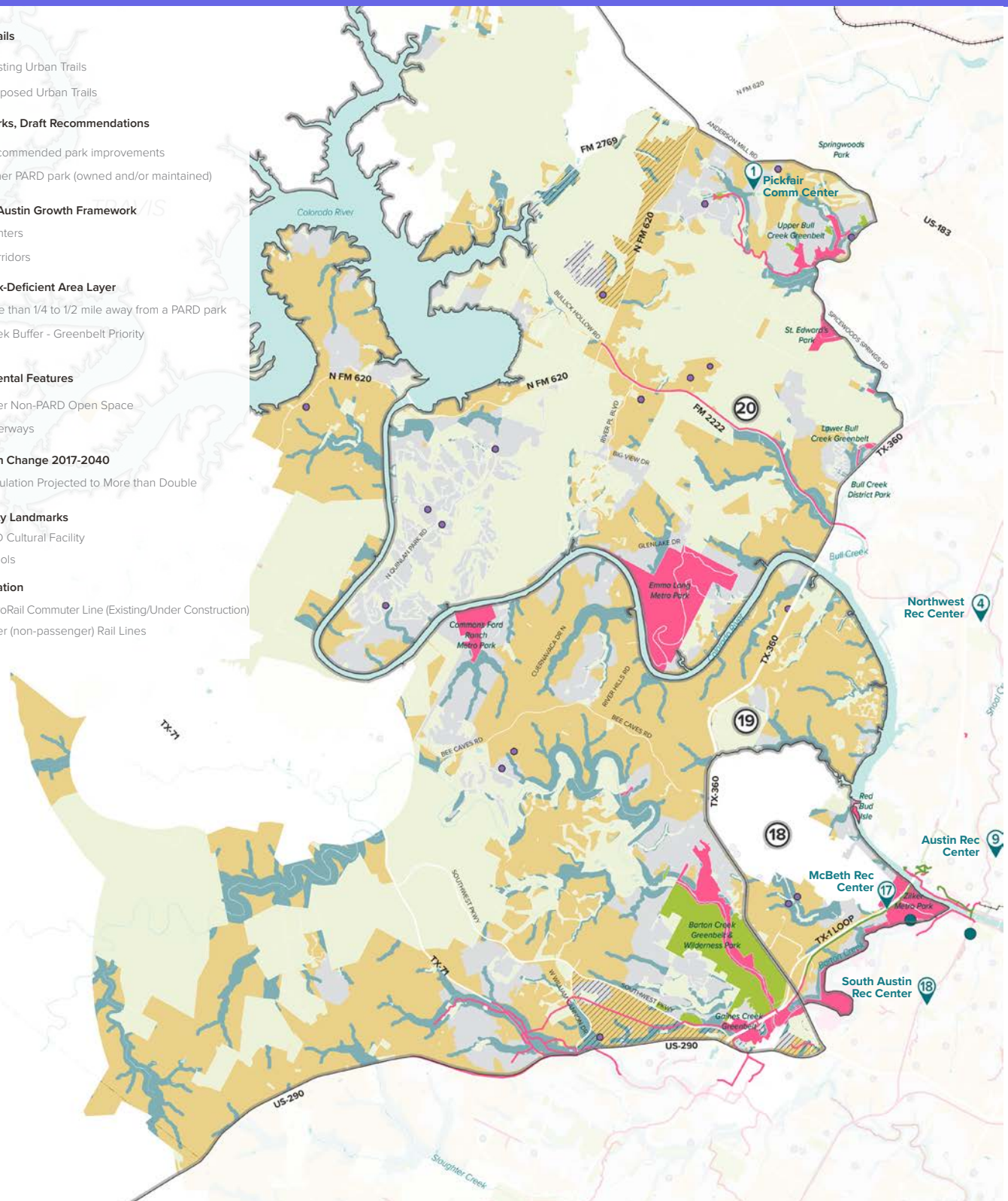
- Population Projected to More than Double

Community Landmarks

- PARD Cultural Facility
- Schools

Transportation

- MetroRail Commuter Line (Existing/Under Construction)
- Other (non-passenger) Rail Lines



Note: Combined Planning Area
Maps to be finalized

FIGURE 28. WEST COMBINED PLANNING AREA MAP
Source: WRT.

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

FUNDING OPTIONS

In order to continue to build and maintain the parks and recreation system, funding should be pursued for operations and capital improvement projects, like those presented in this plan.

To fund improvements to Austin's parks and recreation system, PARD primarily utilizes the following funding sources: General Obligation Bonds, Grants, Historic Preservation Fund, General Funds (City Council Appropriation), Parking Fees, Parkland Dedication, Parkland Mitigation, Tax Increment Financing, Vehicle Rental Tax, as well as Foundations and Partners. In the current Five Year Spending Plan, the General Obligation Bond and Partner Contributions together account for about 83% of planned spending.

With the adoption of Senate Bill 2 in June 2019, lowering the cap on the amount of property tax revenue for cities and counties from 8% to 3.5%, new, sustainable funding sources are essential to implementing the LRP for PARD. There is potential for increasing revenues for the parks and recreation system while still providing affordable recreation opportunities.

The following options are the most feasible to implement in the City of Austin to fund PARD's work and should be fully explored and vetted within the next year. Review of additional funding options should consider potential impacts on equity and be tested through the Office of Equity assessment tool.

EXTERNAL FUNDING

Corporate Sponsorships

This revenue-funding source allows corporations to invest in the development or enhancement of new or existing facilities in park systems. Sponsorships are also highly used for programs and events.

Partnerships

Partnerships are joint development funding sources or operational funding sources between two separate agencies, such as two government entities, a non-profit and a city department, or a private business and a city agency. Two partners jointly develop revenue producing park and recreation facilities and share risk, operational costs, responsibilities and asset management, based on the strengths and weaknesses of each partner. Currently Park Partners, such as the Austin Parks Foundation, Barton Springs Conservancy, Norwood Foundation, Pease Park Conservancy, and Waterloo Greenway, represent a significant funding source of park projects.

Foundations and Partners/Donations

These dollars are raised from tax-exempt, non-profit organizations established with private donations to promote specific causes, activities, or issues. They offer a variety of means to fund capital projects, including capital campaigns, gift catalogs, fund-raisers, endowments, sales of items, etc.

Private Donations

Private donations may also be received in the form of funds, land, facilities, recreation equipment, art or in-kind services. Donations from local and regional businesses as sponsors for events or facilities should be pursued. PARD could also explore opportunities for donations and crowdfunding for special programs and projects.

Irrevocable Remainder Trusts

These trusts are set up with individuals who typically have more than a million dollars in wealth. They will leave a portion of their wealth to the city in a trust fund that grows over a period of time and then is available for the city to use a portion of the interest to support specific park and recreation facilities or programs that are designated by the trustee.

Volunteerism

This is an indirect revenue source in that persons donate time to assist the department in providing a product or service on an hourly basis. This reduces the city's cost in providing the service plus it builds advocacy into the system.

CAPITAL FEES

Capital Fees

Capital fees are added to the cost of revenue-producing facilities such as golf courses, pools, recreation centers, hospitality centers, and sports complexes, and are removed after the improvement is paid off.

Impact Fees

These fees are on top of the set user rate for accessing facilities such as golf courses, recreation centers, and pool facilities to support capital improvements that benefit users of the facility. Texas state law (LGC 395) doesn't currently allow impact fees for parks, but this option could be made possible through legislation.

USER FEES

Recreation Service Fees

This is a dedicated user fee, which can be established by a local ordinance or other government procedures for the purpose of constructing and maintaining recreation facilities. The fee can apply to all organized activities, which require a reservation of some type, or other purposes, as defined by the local government. Examples of such activities include adult basketball, volleyball, tennis, and softball leagues, youth baseball, soccer, football and softball leagues, and special interest classes. The fee allows participants an opportunity to contribute toward the upkeep of the facilities being used.

Fees/Charges

PARD must position its fees and charges to be market-driven and based on both public and private facilities. The potential outcome of revenue generation is consistent with national trends relating to public park and recreation agencies, which generate an average 35% to 50% of operating expenditures.

Ticket Sales/Admissions

This revenue source is generated by providing access to facilities for self-directed activities such as pools, ice skating rinks, ballparks, and entertainment facilities. These user fees help offset operational costs.

Permits (Special Use Permits)

Special permits allow individuals to use specific park property for financial gain. The city either receives a set amount of money or a percentage of the gross service that is being provided.

TAX SUPPORT

Bond Issues

Agencies typically seek park bonds to meet park-related needs. The key is to use debt financing through bonds to address needs that are both unmet and clearly a community priority. It is best to propose a capital-bond project that serves a variety of users and needs.

Property Taxes

Ad valorem taxes on real property.

Special Improvement District/Benefit District

Taxing districts are established to provide funds for certain types of improvements that benefit a specific group of affected properties. Improvements may include landscaping, the erection of fountains, and acquisition of art, and supplemental services for improvement and promotion, including recreation and cultural enhancements. For example, the Downtown Austin Alliance manages and operates a public improvement district for downtown.

Public Improvement District (PID)

New developments can establish a Public Improvement District (PID) when authorized by City Council and legally set up according to state law. This taxing district provides funds especially for the operation and maintenance of public amenities such as parks and major boulevards.

FRANCHISES AND LICENSE AGREEMENTS

Concession Management

Concession management generates revenue from retail sales or rentals of soft goods, hard goods, or consumable items. The city either contracts for the service or receives a set amount of the gross percentage or the full revenue dollars that incorporates a profit after expenses.

Private Management

This entails contracting with a private business to provide and operate desirable recreational activities that are financed, constructed and operated by the private sector with additional compensation paid to the City.

Naming Rights

Many cities and counties have turned to selling the naming rights for new buildings or renovations of existing buildings and parks for the development cost associated with the improvement.

Private Developers

These developers enter into license agreements for city-owned land through a subordinate agreement that pays out a set dollar amount plus a percentage of gross dollars for recreation enhancements. These could include a golf course, marina, restaurants, driving ranges, sports complexes, equestrian facilities, recreation centers, and ice arenas.

Easements

This revenue source is available when the city allows utility companies, businesses or individuals to develop some type of an improvement above ground or below ground on their property for a set period of time with a set dollar amount to be received by the City on an annual basis.

Advertising Sales

This revenue source is for the sale of tasteful and appropriate advertising on park and recreation-related items such as in the city's program guide, on scoreboards, dasher boards and other visible products or services that are consumable or permanent, and that expose the product or service to many people.

Interlocal Agreements

These agreements involve contractual relationships entered into between two or more local units of government and/or between a local unit of government and a non-profit organization for the joint usage/development of sports fields, regional parks, or other facilities.

GRANTS

The grant market continues to grow annually. Grant writers and researchers are essential if the Department is to pursue grants. Matching dollars are required for most federal grants and many state grants. A detailed listing of grants available to the Department can be found as a stand-alone document separate from the LRP.

MEASURING AND TRACKING PROGRESS

A.

ENSURE PARKS ACT AS A RELIEF FROM URBAN LIFE

The impact of Austin's rapid growth is becoming apparent as Austinites increasingly confront the loss of natural areas and increased development. While this growth provides PARD with new resources and more opportunities, it also means PARD has to guard the park system's role as a relief from and counterpoint to Austin's increasingly urban context. Likewise, the parks must become more flexible and multi-purpose to support a higher intensity and wider variety of park users.



STRATEGY	TIMEFRAME	LEAD	PARTNERS
1. Add between 4,000 and 8,000 of new parkland over the next 10 years, maintaining the current standard of 20 acres per 1,000 residents while striving to achieve 24 acres per 1,000 residents.			
1.1 Use Level of Service guidelines and park deficient area mapping to help determine and prioritize areas for parkland acquisition.	Short	Park Planning	Park Development
1.2 Seek out opportunities to increase public access to non-PARD owned parks and open space.	Ongoing	Park Planning	Conservancies, School Districts, BCP, HOAs, Condo/Private-owned
2. Protect and increase natural areas that support immersive nature experiences and provide space and management for environmental functions and benefits.			
2.1 Expand greenbelts and trails along creek buffers.	Ongoing	Park Planning, Park Development, Asset Management	WPD
2.2 Create a set of standard materials and finishes that are unique to Austin.	Short	Park Development w/ support from Park Planning & Asset Management	-
2.3 Use parks as functional landscapes that perform green stormwater infrastructure and flood mitigation roles to enhance resiliency, recreational use, and beauty.	Ongoing	Park Development, Natural Resources	Office of Sustainability, WPD, Austin Water, Park Partners
2.4 Require the consistent use of native or adapted planting.	Ongoing	Park Development, Operations & Maintenance	-
2.5 Work with the Office of Sustainability, Watershed Protection Department, and other partners to support green infrastructure and address gaps in the network.	Medium	Park Planning, Park Development, Natural Resources	Office of Sustainability, WPD, Austin Water
2.6 Prioritize a comprehensive tree inventory as a baseline to inform increased tree planting on PARD parkland.	Short	Natural Resources	Park Planning, Development
2.7 Implement strategies to increase shade and Austin's urban tree canopy as recommended in Austin's Comprehensive Urban Forest Master Plan.	Ongoing	Natural Resources, Park Planning, Park Development	Office of Sustainability, WPD, Austin Water
3. Make it easier for Austinites to spend time interacting with water.			
3.1 Implement the Aquatics Master Plan.	Ongoing	Aquatics, Park Development	Asset Management
3.2 Assess aquatic facilities on a regular basis to determine remaining lifecycle, the feasibility of continued maintenance, and the potential need to decommission or redevelop the site considering community need.	Ongoing	Aquatics	Asset Management

STRATEGY	TIMEFRAME	LEAD	PARTNERS
3.3 Create a fishing and boating guide.	Short	Communications & Engagement	Park Planning
3.4 Explore opportunities to increase public access to waterways, including creeks, rivers, and lakes.	Short	Park Planning	Natural Resources, Community Recreation
4. Increase the number of community gardens.			
4.1 Establish a community garden at every Metro Park.	Medium	Park Planning, Park Development	Natural Resources, Office of Sustainability
4.2 Ensure equitable distribution of community gardens.	Long	Park Planning, Park Development	Natural Resources, Office of Sustainability
4.3 Expand programming and activities around existing and newly established community gardens.	Medium	Natural Resources	Community Recreation, Office of Sustainability
4.4 Increase the number of dedicated park staff for the community garden program.	Medium	Natural Resources	Community Recreation, Office of Sustainability
4.5 Simplify the process to start a community garden.	Short	Natural Resources	Office of Sustainability
5. Invest in multi-purpose, unstructured spaces capable of supporting flexible uses.			
5.1 Create a set of standards for flexible spaces in parks. Provide standards to help incorporate flexible recreation spaces and associated infrastructure within parks.	Short	Park Planning, Park Development	Operations & Maintenance
5.2 When developing plans for parks, include intentionally designed flexible use spaces where appropriate. Park master plan should include consideration of flexible use spaces.	Ongoing	Park Planning, Park Development	Operations & Maintenance
6. Provide dedicated off-leash dog areas in appropriate locations to ensure both dog-owners and non-dog-owners can enjoy parks.			
6.1 Ensure equitable distribution of off-leash areas throughout the city.	Ongoing	Park Planning	Park Development
6.2 Refrain from placing off-leash areas in existing neighborhood parks with space constraints.	Ongoing	Park Planning	Park Development
6.3 Create a set of standards for off-leash dog areas.	Short	Park Planning, Park Development	-
6.4 Provide dedicated, well-signed off-leash dog trails in large parks where these trails are buffered from other densely used park areas.	Medium	Park Planning, Park Development	-
6.5 Increase educational efforts to encourage a safe and enjoyable environment in off-leash areas.	Ongoing	Park Rangers	Park Planning
6.6 Consider including water features in off-leash dog areas so that dogs can exercise and cool off safely.	Short	Park Planning, Park Development	-
7. Protect and manage natural areas to intentionally balance recreational use with environmental protection.			
7.1 Create and implement land and forest management plans.	Ongoing	Natural Resources	Park Planning
7.2 Manage trail access and limit active recreation that negatively impacts natural areas.	Ongoing	Natural Resources	Park Development, Operations & Maintenance
7.3 Actively manage natural areas to understand and increase ecosystem services.	Ongoing	Natural Resources	Operations & Maintenance
7.4 Continue to prioritize acquisition of parkland for natural areas, including creek buffers for greenbelt extensions.	Ongoing	Park Planning, Natural Resources	WPD
7.5 Increase public access easements within non-PARD conservation areas and natural lands.	Ongoing	Park Planning, Natural Resources	WPD, Counties, Austin Water, BCP
7.6 Explore where “nature play” areas could be added to PARD parkland.	Ongoing	Park Planning, Natural Resources	Park Development

B.

EXPAND & IMPROVE PARK ACCESS FOR ALL

Providing equitable access to parkland for all residents is a priority for PARD. Through the Long Range Plan process some community members commented on the difficulty of accessing and navigating the park system. There are multiple tools that can be used to improve park access including expanded trail connections, improved wayfinding, and greater sensitivity to ADA standards.



STRATEGY	TIMEFRAME	LEAD	PARTNERS
1. Prior to any significant master plan or development, work with partner organizations and current and long-time residents to ensure community involvement in the process.			
1.1 Review current trends and risk for displacement for relevant area.	Ongoing	Park Planning	Equity Office
1.2 Establish engagement partnerships.	Ongoing	Park Planning	Neighborhood groups, PARD Partners
1.3 Ensure equity throughout the process.	Ongoing	Park Planning	Neighborhood groups, PARD Partners
1.4 Consult the LRP-identified priority needs for facilities and programs.	Ongoing	Park Planning	-
2. Invest in the acquisition of new parkland that can make parks a part of everyday life in existing and future underserved areas.			
2.1 Create additional pocket and button parks to extend additional parkland into dense areas of the city.	Ongoing	Park Planning	Park Development
2.2 Create additional neighborhood parks in areas that are underserved.	Ongoing	Park Planning	Park Development
2.3 Acquire land for larger greenbelt parks in less developed parts of the city where substantial growth and development is expected.	Ongoing	Park Planning	Natural Resources
2.4 Acquire land to provide better walking and biking connectivity between parks.	Ongoing	Park Planning	Austin Transportation
3. Increase the number of entrances to existing parks in order to expand the number of residents within walking distance of a park.			
3.1 Assess opportunities for additional entrances and access points using the parkland deficiency mapping.	Short	Park Planning	Austin Transportation
3.2 Proactively plan entrances and access points for new parks to ensure the greatest number of residents are within walking distance.	Ongoing	Park Planning	Austin Transportation
3.3 Prioritize new access or entry points near existing mobility networks, including sidewalks, bike routes, urban trails, and transit.	Ongoing	Park Planning	Austin Transportation
3.4 Expand and standardize entrances, while discouraging informal entrances to reduce unstable and unmaintained trails.	Medium	Park Planning	Park Development
4. Increase multi-use and nature trails within the existing PARD park system and continue to acquire land for linear parks and greenbelts that can accommodate larger trail systems.			
4.1 Look for opportunities to acquire properties for greenbelt, trail, and linear park expansion.	Ongoing	Park Planning, Natural Resources	Conservation Partners
5. Support the efforts of the <i>Austin Strategic Mobility Plan</i>, City departments, and partners in advancing the mobility network beyond the PARD park system.			
5.1 Improve pedestrian access to parkland by advocating for safe crossings within a 1/4 mile walkshed of all PARD parks, as described in ASMP Action 139.	Ongoing	Austin Transportation	Park Planning

STRATEGY	TIMEFRAME	LEAD	PARTNERS
5.2 Improve integration with transit and bikeshare networks to expand parkland access.	Ongoing	Austin Transportation	Park Planning
5.3 Work with Austin Transportation, Public Works, Corridor Program Office, and other partners to improve mobility around and between parks and nearby activity areas.	Ongoing	Park Planning	Austin Transportation, Public Works, Corridor Program, others
5.4 Explore regulations and infrastructure enhancements for new forms of mobility near parks and along trails.	Short	Austin Transportation, Park Planning	-
6. Achieve a more even distribution of facilities that have a strong citywide interest.			
6.1 Evaluate the need for different facilities based on geographic distribution, age distribution, and current and future population (using guidance from the National Recreation and Park Association) on a regular basis.	Short	Park Planning	Park Development
6.2 Evaluate the equitable distribution and quantity of restrooms throughout the park system and determine if access and sustainability can be increased through technology and innovation.	Medium	Park Planning	Operations & Maintenance
7. Aspire to provide universal access.			
7.1 Seek opportunities to go beyond minimum ADA requirements and Texas Accessibility Standards to achieve broader access for all residents.	Ongoing	Park Development	Park Planning
7.2 Add playscapes in existing under-served areas and ensure there is at least one playground with all-abilities components in each planning area.	Ongoing	Park Development	Park Planning
7.3 Implement PARD's ADA Transition plan.	Ongoing	Park Development	Park Planning
7.4 Provide culturally appropriate signage in parks.	Medium	Park Planning	Park Development
7.5 Increase access to restrooms that are gender neutral, and compliant with ADA regulations and Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS).	Long	Park Development	Park Planning
8. Improve signage and wayfinding markers at entrances and along trails to help park users navigate with confidence.			
8.1 Create and implement a signage and wayfinding plan.	Medium	Park Planning	Park Development, Communications & Engagement
8.2 Incorporate signage and wayfinding into park plans.	Ongoing	Park Planning	Park Development, Communications & Engagement
9. Improve web-based information describing the park system to help people quickly find amenities and experiences they are seeking.			
Improve web-based information.	Ongoing/Short	Communications & Engagement	Asset Management
10. Work with Austin Transportation to evaluate the need and appropriate fee structure for private automobile parking areas.			
10.1 Create parking standards for parks and facilities.	Medium	Parks Planning	Park Development, Austin Transportation

C.

ACTIVATE & ENHANCE URBAN PUBLIC SPACES

Urban public spaces require a different approach and have historically been overlooked and underestimated in terms of their ability to improve quality of life in denser urban areas. As PARD looks to expand park access and reach developed areas, activating smaller urban public spaces will become an increasingly crucial strategy to extend the benefits of parks to more people. To be successful, this will require a flexible, partnership-centric approach with a blend of PARD programming on non-PARD-owned spaces, and partner programming and maintenance at PARD parkland.



STRATEGY	TIMEFRAME	LEAD	PARTNERS
10.2 Explore ways to both reduce private automobile trips to parks and reduce parking demand.	Ongoing	Austin Transportation	Park Planning
1. Build on the Downtown Austin Alliance's <i>Downtown Austin Vision</i> to holistically elevate the quality of the urban public realm.			
1.1 Implement the <i>Downtown Austin Vision</i> (from the Downtown Austin Alliance).	Ongoing	Downtown Austin Alliance, Park Planning	Citywide Partners
1.2 Reduce barriers to hosting seasonal / special events on underutilized land downtown.	Ongoing	Special Events	Downtown Partners
1.3 Continue to reference the Downtown Parks and Open Space Master Plan in the 2010 Downtown Austin Plan.	Ongoing	Park Planning	-
2. Invest in more lighting and increased staff and volunteer presence, especially along trails and pathways, to ensure parks feel safe after dark.			
2.1 Incorporate Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles in all park plans.	Ongoing	Park Planning, Park Development	Austin PD
2.2 Use the Park Score Cards to assess parks in need of safety improvements.	Short	Asset Management, Parks Planning	Operations & Maintenance
2.3 Assess trails for safety concerns and create a plan to address any issues.	Short	Operations & Maintenance, Natural Resources	Park Partners
2.4 Increase Park Rangers to add a more visible presence in parks and especially along trails and pathways.	Ongoing	Natural Resources	-
2.5 Expand the structure for a park ambassador program.	Medium	Park Planning	Park Partners
2.6 Ensure all updated lighting is night sky friendly and meets International standards.	Short	Park Development	Operations & Maintenance
3. Support more dense, flexible, and diverse programs and amenities (e.g., temporary seating or play equipment) in urban public spaces within and beyond PARD parkland.			
3.1 Find opportunities to reduce barriers to hosting programs in urban spaces.	Ongoing	Planning, Community Recreation, Centralized Programs	Special Events, Park Partners
3.2 Work with partners to invest in the necessary infrastructure to host programs in the urban core.	Long	Park Development	Operations & Maintenance
4. Continuously monitor and provide a clear picture of cost and revenue information to the community, including community and economic impacts associated with large events in urban parks.			
4.1 Create a fact sheet, available digitally and in print, that provides answers to commonly asked questions.	Short	Park Planning, Communications & Engagement	Operations & Maintenance, Special Events
4.2 Continually evaluate the public benefit of events held in parks and measure social and economic impacts, and share findings with the community.	Ongoing	Special Events	Operations & Maintenance
5. Increase access to healthy and fresh foods through parks.			
5.1 Work with partners to reduce barriers to farmers' markets locating and operating on city-owned land.	Ongoing	Special Events, Natural Resources	Park Partners, Office of Sustainability
5.2 Support community organizations and partners interested in hosting farmers' markets.	Ongoing	Special Events, Natural Resources	Park Partners, Office of Sustainability

STRATEGY	TIMEFRAME	LEAD	PARTNERS
5.3 Build on the success of the City of Austin’s “Fresh for Less” program.	Short	Special Events, Natural Resources	Park Partners, Office of Sustainability
5.4 Create a comprehensive guide for vending on PARD-owned property to increase transparency around regulations and guidelines for vending.	Medium	Special Events, Finance	Park Partners, Office of Sustainability, Communications & Engagement
6. Expand PARD’s Historic Preservation and Heritage Tourism Program to protect, restore, and promote the cultural and historic resources of the park system			
6.1 Maintain and update an inventory of PARD’s historic and cultural resources.	Short	Park Planning	Asset Management
6.2 Provide online access to information about historic resources, including historic designations and archives.	Medium	Park Planning	Communications & Engagement
6.3 Continue investing in the restoration of historic sites through funding from the City of Austin’s Historic Preservation Fund.	Ongoing	Park Planning, Park Development	Asset Management
6.4 Develop marketing materials and a web presence for PARD historic sites; explore opportunities to provide interpretive materials, on-site signage, and audio or print-based storytelling.	Medium	Park Planning	Communications & Engagement
6.5 Raise awareness about the importance of protecting archaeological resources.	Ongoing	Communications & Engagement	Park Planning
6.6 Provide training and educational resources to staff and PARD partners on historic preservation best practices.	Short	Park Planning	PARD partners

D.

ALIGN PROGRAMS WITH COMMUNITY INTEREST

While there is a high demand for more programs at parks, there is also a strong interest in Austin for natural experiences and unprogrammed spaces and activities. As the needs and interests of community members change, program offerings should be evaluated and adjusted as needed to reflect the most relevant programs.



STRATEGY	TIMEFRAME	LEAD	PARTNERS
6.7 Implement the Historic Cemeteries Master Plan.	Ongoing	Park Planning, Cemetery Division	PARD partners
1. Provide more nature-based programs.			
1.1 Work with partners, including recreation centers and summer camps, to increase nature programing throughout the city.	Medium	Community Recreation, Centralized Programs, Park Planning	Special Events, Park Partners
1.2 Add high-quality educational signage to natural areas.	Long	Natural Resources	Park Development
1.3 Consider using public art as a way to interpret natural areas and features.	Long	Natural Resources, Museums & Cultural Programs	Park Development, Park Planning
1.4 Add programing to natural spaces in a guided way to increase peoples' ability to comfortably explore on their own.	Ongoing	Natural Resources	Community Recreation, Centralized Programs, Park Planning
1.5 Consider the feasibility of creating a second nature center or the potential for rotating satellite / temporary exhibits and programs to bring quality nature programming to a larger slice of the community.	Medium	Natural Resources, Park Planning	Park Development
1.6 Create more nature-based youth education and summer camps.	Ongoing	Centralized Programs	Community Recreation, Park Partners
1.7 Expand Park Ranger nature stewardship training to better connect residents of all ages to nature.	Ongoing	Natural Resources	Community Recreation, Centralized Programs,
1.8 Incorporate natural areas (e.g., native plant gardens, tree groves, etc.) in all PARD facilities, where feasible.	Ongoing	Natural Resources, Park Development	Park Planning, Operations & Maintenance
2. Increase adult and senior programming across multiple categories – active recreation, nature-based, and arts and culture.			
2.1 Consider changing the nomenclature for “Senior Centers” to “Active Adult Centers.”	Short	Community Recreation	Park Planning
2.2 Enhance programming at existing Senior Centers.	Ongoing	Community Recreation, Museums & Cultural Programs	Park Planning
2.3 Provide more intergenerational programs.	Ongoing	Community Recreation, Museums & Cultural Programs	Park Planning
2.4 Increase operating budget for Bringing Seniors Together event series.	Medium	Community Recreation	Park Planning
2.5 Grow the Austin Senior Games event over the next decade.	Long	Community Recreation, Athletics	Park Planning
2.6 Establish senior swim times and universal access pools to expand senior access to swimming and water fitness.	Short/Ongoing	Aquatics	Community Recreation
3. Increase the number, diversity, and equitable distribution of arts and culture programs being offered through PARD.			
3.1 Explore the feasibility of partnering to establish new cultural/arts/community centers in areas that fall substantially below the citywide average (North, Southeast, Southwest, and West).	Short	Museums & Cultural Programs, Park Planning	Park Development

STRATEGY	TIMEFRAME	LEAD	PARTNERS
3.2 Expand Arts-Based Education.	Ongoing	Museums & Cultural Programs	Park Planning
3.3 Partner to pilot a new type of indoor cultural facility, a Community Creativity Center (CCC), which would provide community-driven, multi-disciplinary arts spaces.	Short	Museums & Cultural Programs	Park Planning, Economic Development Dept.
3.4 Increase public art installations.	Ongoing	Art in Public Places	Museums & Cultural Programs
3.5 Complete necessary improvements and renovations to existing cultural, arts, recreation, and community centers to support additional programming.	Ongoing	Museums & Cultural Programs	Park Development, Park Planning
4. Explore partnership strategies to increase low-income access to PARD programming.			
4.1 Provide a guide highlighting the range of programs available to residents at reduced or no-cost.	Medium	Community Recreation, Centralized Programing	Communications & Engagement
4.2 Review opportunities to expand low or no-cost programming in areas that may be lacking based on local community need, interest, grant opportunities, and funding availability.	Ongoing	Community Recreation, Centralized Programing, Museums & Cultural Programs	Park Planning
4.3 Provide a web-based asset map of PARD programs and events on the Age Friendly Austin website.	Ongoing	Centralized Programing	Communications & Engagement
5. Leverage “pop-up” programming and temporary uses to activate public spaces and expand access to programs typically held in recreation and cultural centers.			
5.1 Increase support and staffing for PARD’s Community and Engagement Division to help plan and implement increased programming and improve equity across the park system.	Short	Museums & Cultural Programs, Community Recreation, Communications & Engagement	Park Partners
5.2 Work within the partnership structure to explore opportunities for increased programs in unconventional or underutilized spaces, where gaps exist.	Ongoing	Museums & Cultural Programs, Community Recreation	Park Partners
6. Continually assess community needs and proactively plan for recreation programming that aligns to these needs and trends.			
6.1 Convene PARD facility leadership and staff to proactively evaluate strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats at each site to identify small scale improvements that can be made in the short-term to fields, irrigation, programming, and/or building efficiencies.	Short	Park Planning, Community Recreation	Operations & Maintenance
6.2 Proactively look for ways to maximize flexibility of facilities to accommodate multiple programs and emerging recreation offerings and needs.	Ongoing	Museums & Cultural, Community Rec, Centralized Programs, Nat. Resources	Park Partners
6.3 Periodically evaluate each program through user and staff surveys.	Ongoing	Museums & Cultural, Community Rec, Centralized Programs, Nat. Resources	Park Programming Partners
6.4 Recruit community residents to lead existing programming and to design and fund new programs, especially racial equity focused programming.	Ongoing	Museums & Cultural, Community Rec, Centralized Programs, Nat. Resources	Park Programming Partners
6.5 Work more closely with PARD staff and community to expand youth programming.	Ongoing	Museums & Cultural, Community Rec, Centralized Programs, Nat. Resources	Park Programming Partners
6.6 Invest in succession planning for program staffing to ensure seamless transitions, especially for kids programming.	Ongoing	Museums & Cultural, Community Rec, Centralized Programs, Nat. Resources	Park Programming Partners
6.7 Pursue opportunities to provide universal access programming and programs tailored to meet the needs of children with physical and developmental disabilities.	Ongoing	Museums & Cultural, Community Rec, Centralized Programs, Nat. Resources	Park Programming Partners

E.

OPTIMIZE & IMPROVE EFFICIENCY OF OPERATIONS

Leverage partnerships and revenue opportunities to elevate the quality of PARD operations and maintenance while upholding equitable park access and ensuring a sustainable and wellbalanced PARD budget.



STRATEGY	TIMEFRAME	LEAD	PARTNERS
6.8 Invest in existing golf infrastructure to maintain conditions.	Ongoing	Golf Services	Operations & Maintenance
1. Consolidate and improve efficiency of maintenance operations, administrative, and program management functions.			
1.1 Consider relocation of maintenance operations staff to a more centralized, accessible, and efficient location.	Short	Park Planning, Operations & Maintenance	All PARD Depts.
1.2 Explore locating a new Aquatics Division headquarters close to a pool to make lifeguard training easier.	Short	Park Planning, Aquatics	All PARD Depts.
1.3 Explore whether three satellite maintenance facilities, geographically dispersed throughout the city, would minimize staff travel time between parks and facilities.	Ongoing	Park Planning, Operations & Maintenance	All PARD Depts.
1.4 Consider development of a new, centralized PARD Headquarters at current site or on the site of the Central Maintenance Complex (CMC) on Lakeshore Blvd.	Ongoing	PARD Leadership, Park Planning	All PARD Depts.
1.5 Expand Maintenance and Operations scope to include care of natural areas and green infrastructure and identify resources and organizational changes needed to support this expanded role.	Short	Operations & Maintenance, Natural Resources	Planning
1.6 Continue to develop a complete asset inventory including condition, risk, and criticality.	Ongoing	Asset Management	-
1.7 Formalize and create common standards for an operations and maintenance agreement with school parks and other partner organizations.	Short	Operations & Management, Park Planning	School Districts, Park Planning
2. Improve procurement and contracting process to make it easier to apply for PARD contracts.			
	Short	Financial Services	Other City Depts. as needed
3. Engage with and provide work opportunities in parks to help people experiencing homelessness.			
3.1 Strengthen and expand the Workforce First program.	Short	Natural Resources, Operations & Maintenance	Communications & Engagement
3.2 Consider a holistic approach that brings together police, health, advocacy, conservation, and park operations and maintenance staff to expand resources available to those experiencing homelessness in parks.	Ongoing/	Natural Resources, Operations & Maintenance	Communications & Engagement
4. Improve the value and awareness of parks and recreation system offerings to the community.			
4.1 Increase staff capacity in the Communications and Engagement Division to help bridge the gap between existing resources and offerings and community knowledge of and interaction with the parks system.	Short	Communications & Engagement	-
4.2 Develop an effective reservation, intake and data collection system for users and profile information.	Medium	Financial Services	Community Recreation, Centralized Programs

STRATEGY	TIMEFRAME	LEAD	PARTNERS
4.3 Advance the use of technology on marketing and promotions of key programs and recreational offerings as an attraction.	Ongoing	Communications & Engagement	Community Recreation, Centralized Programs
4.4 Expand customer training and focus of staff and volunteers on how to communicate the value of Austin's park system to residents and visitors.	Ongoing	Human Resources	All Departments
4.5 Expand recreation program standards to support core recreations services.	Short	Community Recreation, Centralized Programs	-
4.6 Consider centralizing programs that leverage outside volunteers and funding.	Short	Park Planning	Centralized Programs
5. Develop a clear organizational framework for PARD partnerships that is equitable, supportive of PARD's mission and goals, and is regularly evaluated to track and monitor impacts and outcomes			
5.1 Develop a partnership assessment tool that can be used to help develop a framework for the many types of partnership models and expand FTE staff to create greater capacity for support of partner models.	Short	Park Planning	Park Partners
5.2 Use the LRP needs assessment and park condition assessments to match up partners with priority areas of need or specific parks in need of volunteer support.	Ongoing	Park Planning, Park Development, Asset Management	Community Recreation, Centralized Programs
5.3 Develop goals and metrics to evaluate partnership impacts and share results with the community.	Short	Park Planning	Park Partners
5.4 Communicate areas of need and opportunity with existing and potential partners.	Ongoing	Park Planning, Operations and Maintenance, Centralized Programs	Park Partners
5.5 Provide opportunities for partners to engage with each other and find potential ways to work together where interests and areas of high need overlap.	Ongoing	Park Planning	Park Partners
5.6 Consider an enhanced donor recognition program that provides structure and opportunities for enhanced public-private partnership and financial support from the Austin community.	Ongoing	Park Planning	Park Partners
6. Pursue sustainability and resiliency goals at all PARD parkland and facilities.			
6.1 Coordinate with the Office of Sustainability to meet goals for energy use and carbon neutral operations.	Ongoing	Natural Resources, Park Development, Operations & Maintenance	Office of Sustainability, WPD
6.2 Work with partners to improve sustainability of purchasing and operations.	Ongoing	Park Development, Operations & Maintenance	Office of Sustainability, Park Partners
6.3 Consider environmental standards that bolster the health of the surrounding community and the local ecology.	Ongoing	Park Development, Park Planning	Office of Sustainability, WPD
6.4 Implement comprehensive recycling and composting standards to meet City of Austin Zero Waste Plan goals.	Short	Park Development, Park Planning	Office of Sustainability, WPD
6.5 Partner with Austin Resource Recovery and the Watershed Protection Department to educate members of the community to 'Leave No Trace' (LNT).	Short	Natural Resources	ARR, WPD
6.6 Ensure that emergency operations management and resiliency are included in all park planning efforts.	Ongoing	Park Development, Park Planning	Office of Sustainability



FIGURE 29. YETT PARK
Source: PARD

To be completed following
Community Meeting Series #3.

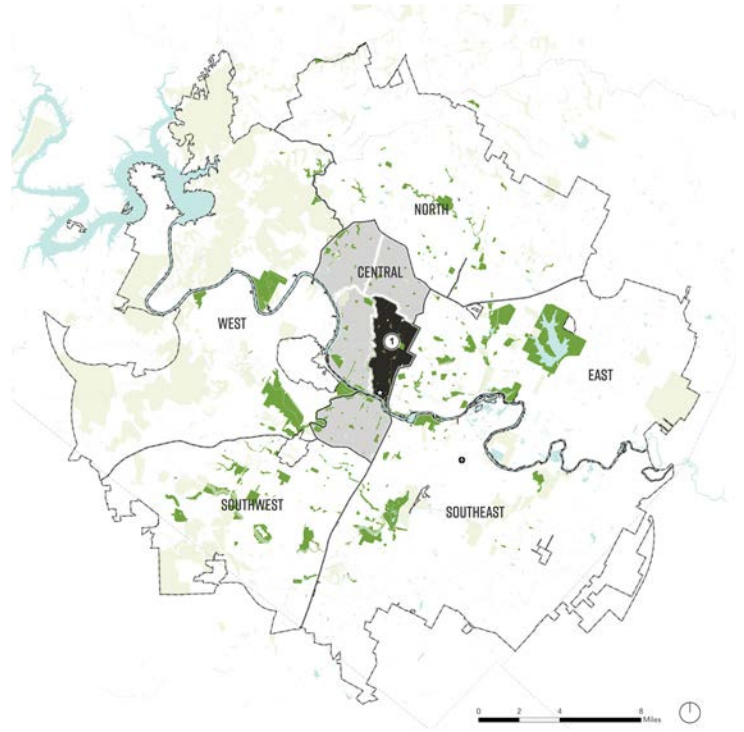
IN THIS CHAPTER

PARK PLANNING AREA
RECOMMENDATIONS

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

APPENDICES

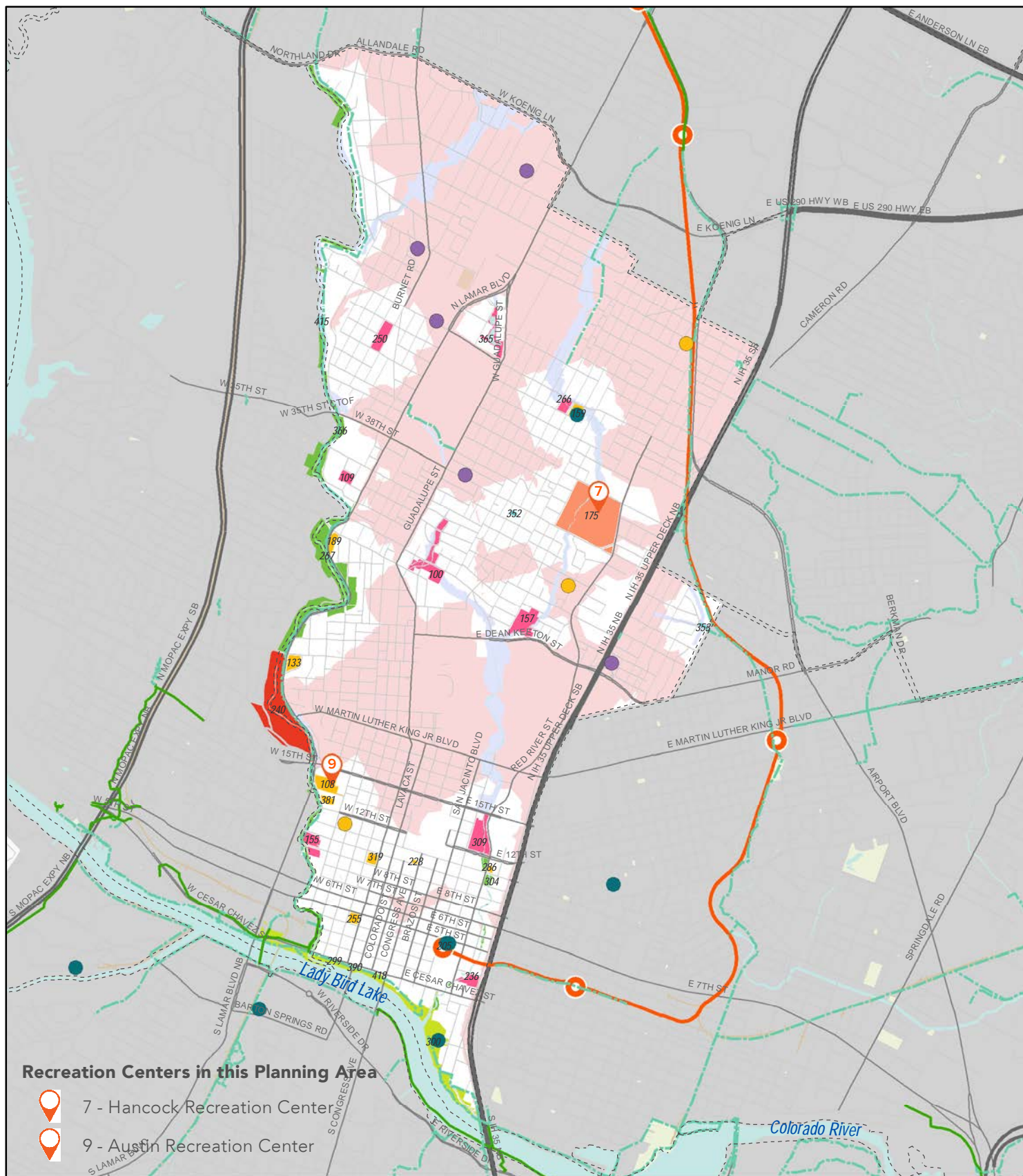
PARK PLANNING AREA RECOMMENDATIONS



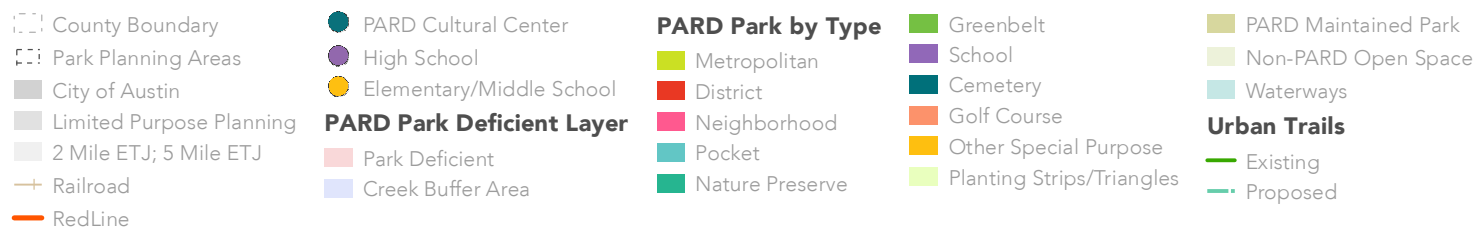
CENTRAL PARK PLANNING AREA #1

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* Note: To be Completed following final review of combined planning areas

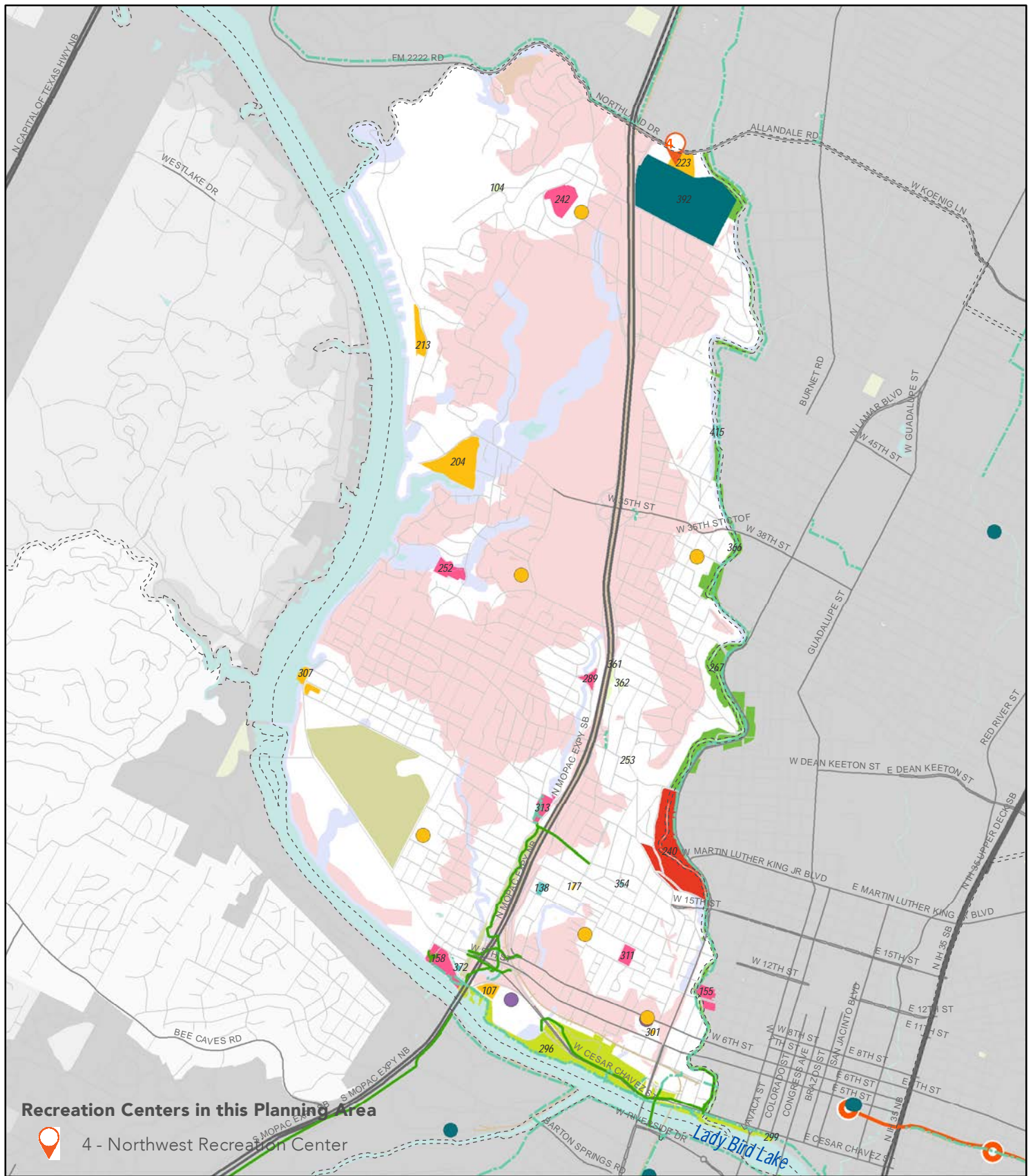


Austin Parks Long Range Plan PARD Planning Area # 1

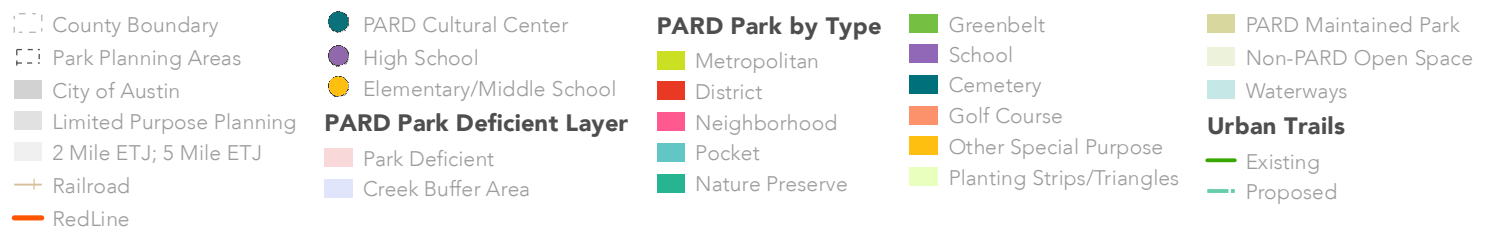


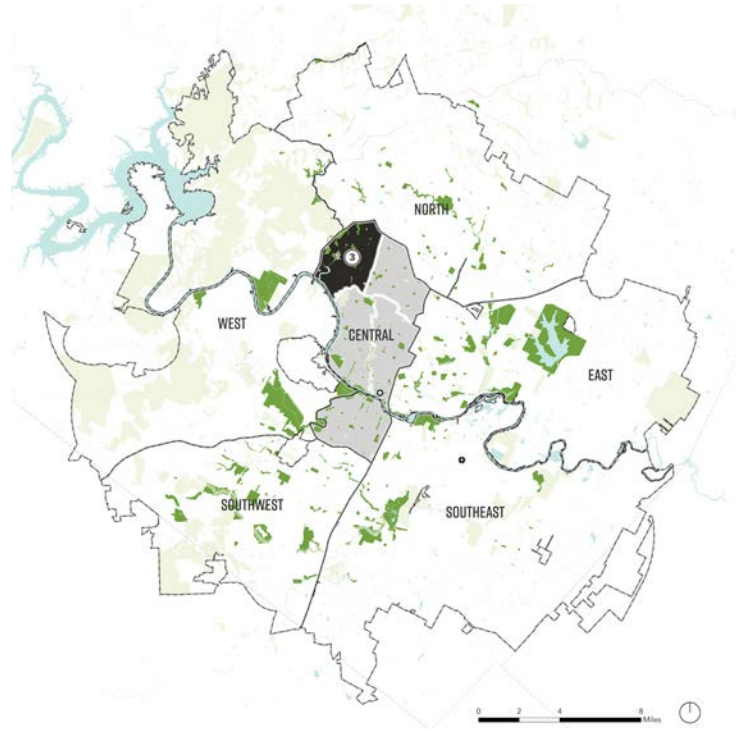
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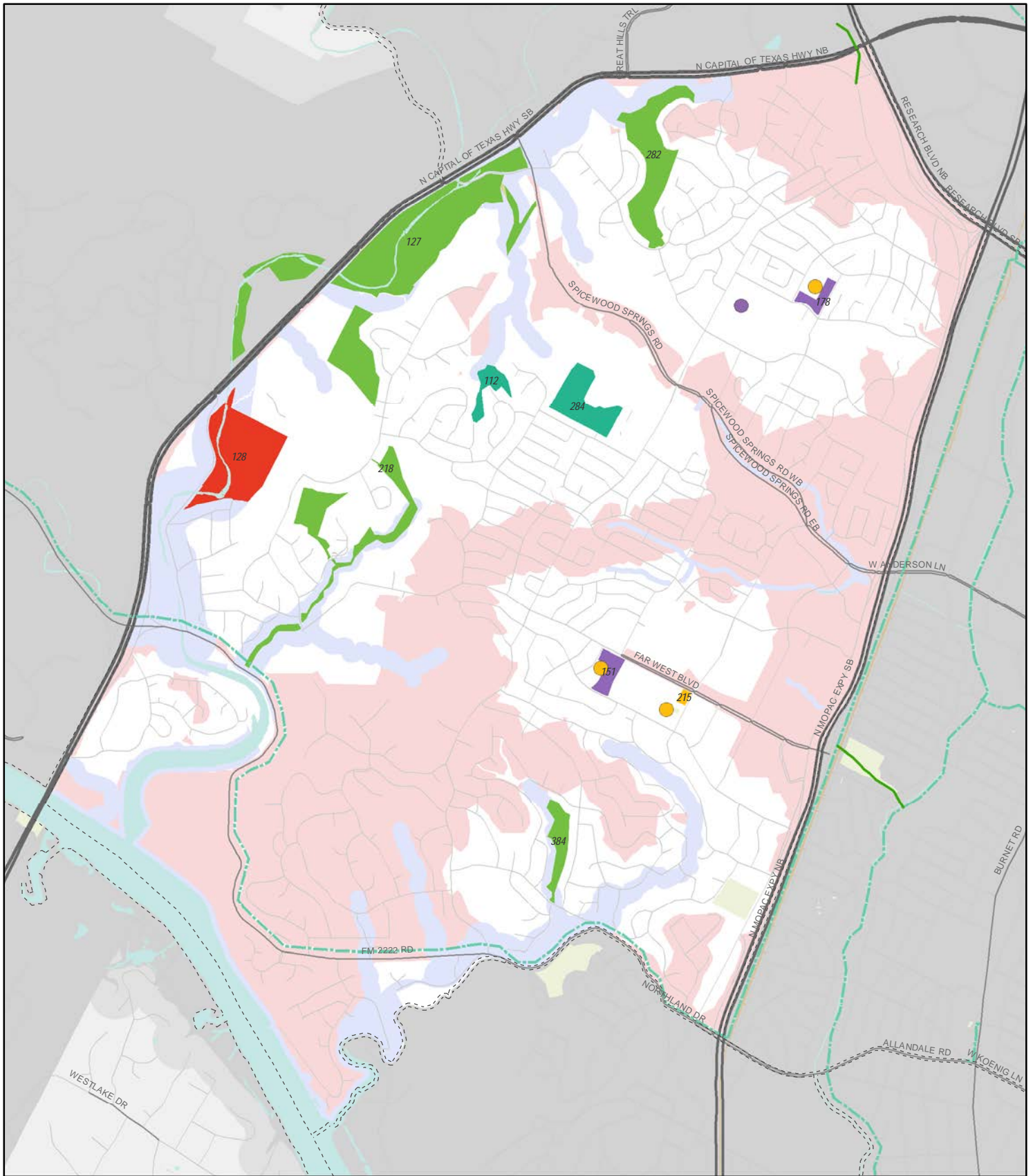




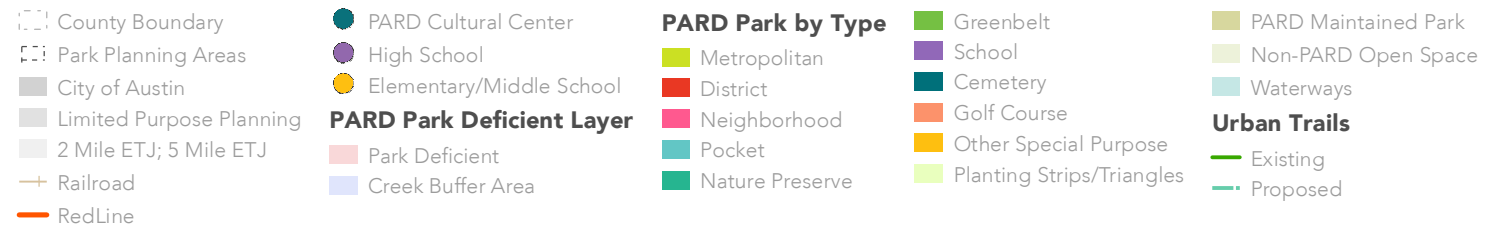
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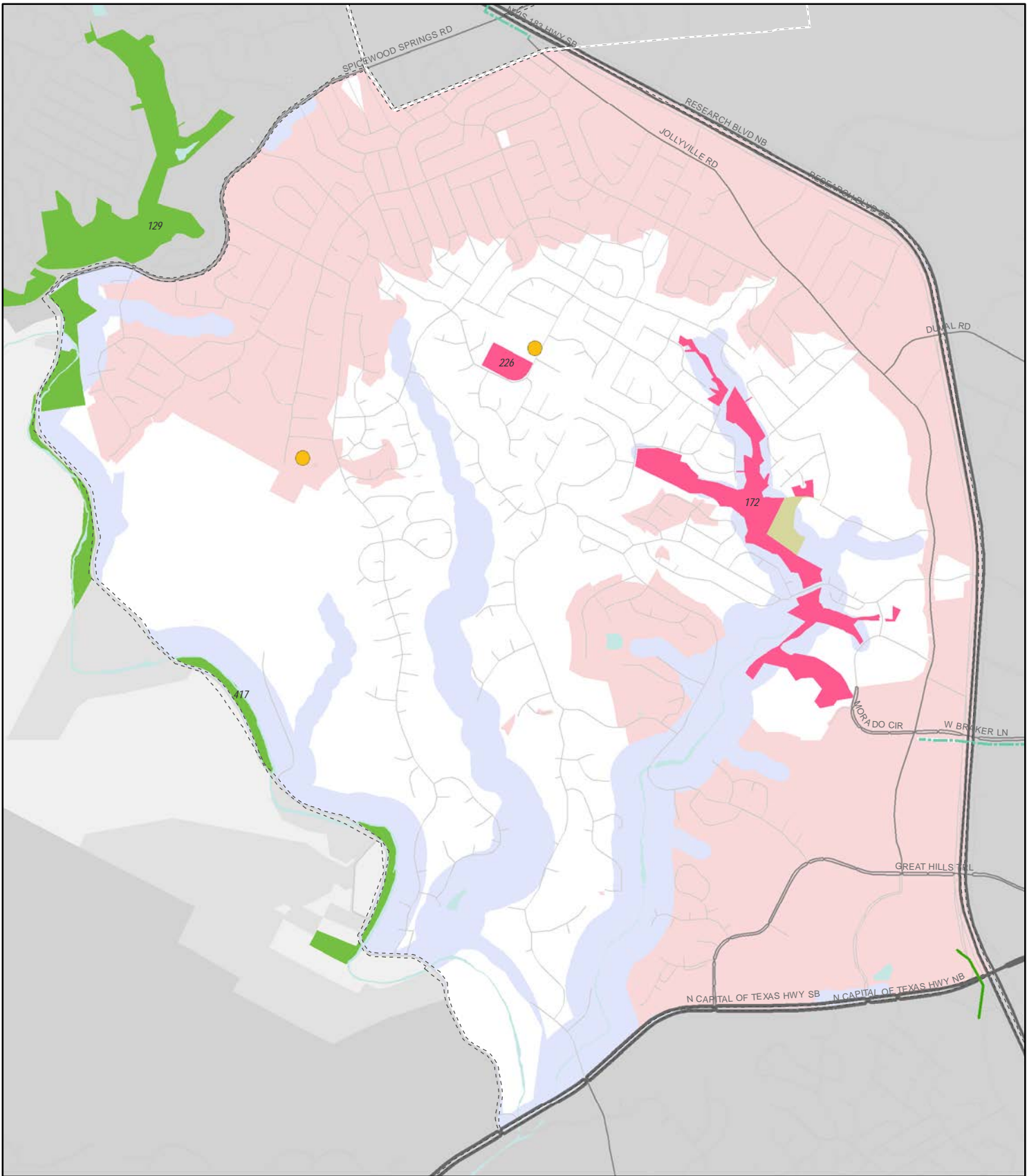


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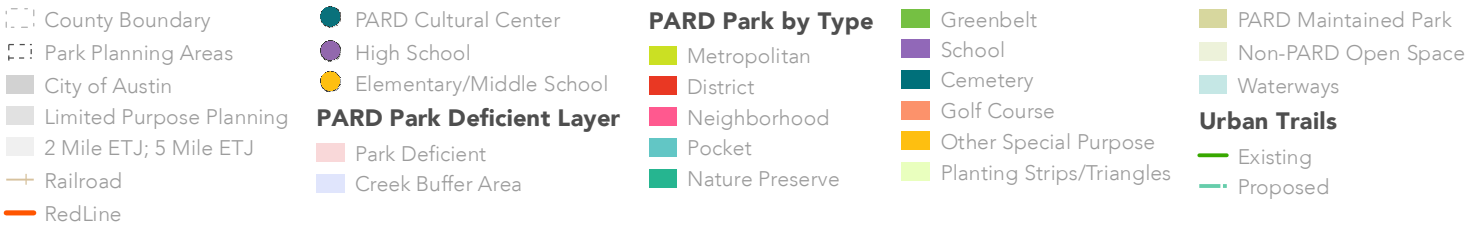


Austin Parks Long Range Plan PARD Planning Area # 3





Austin Parks Long Range Plan PARD Planning Area # 4

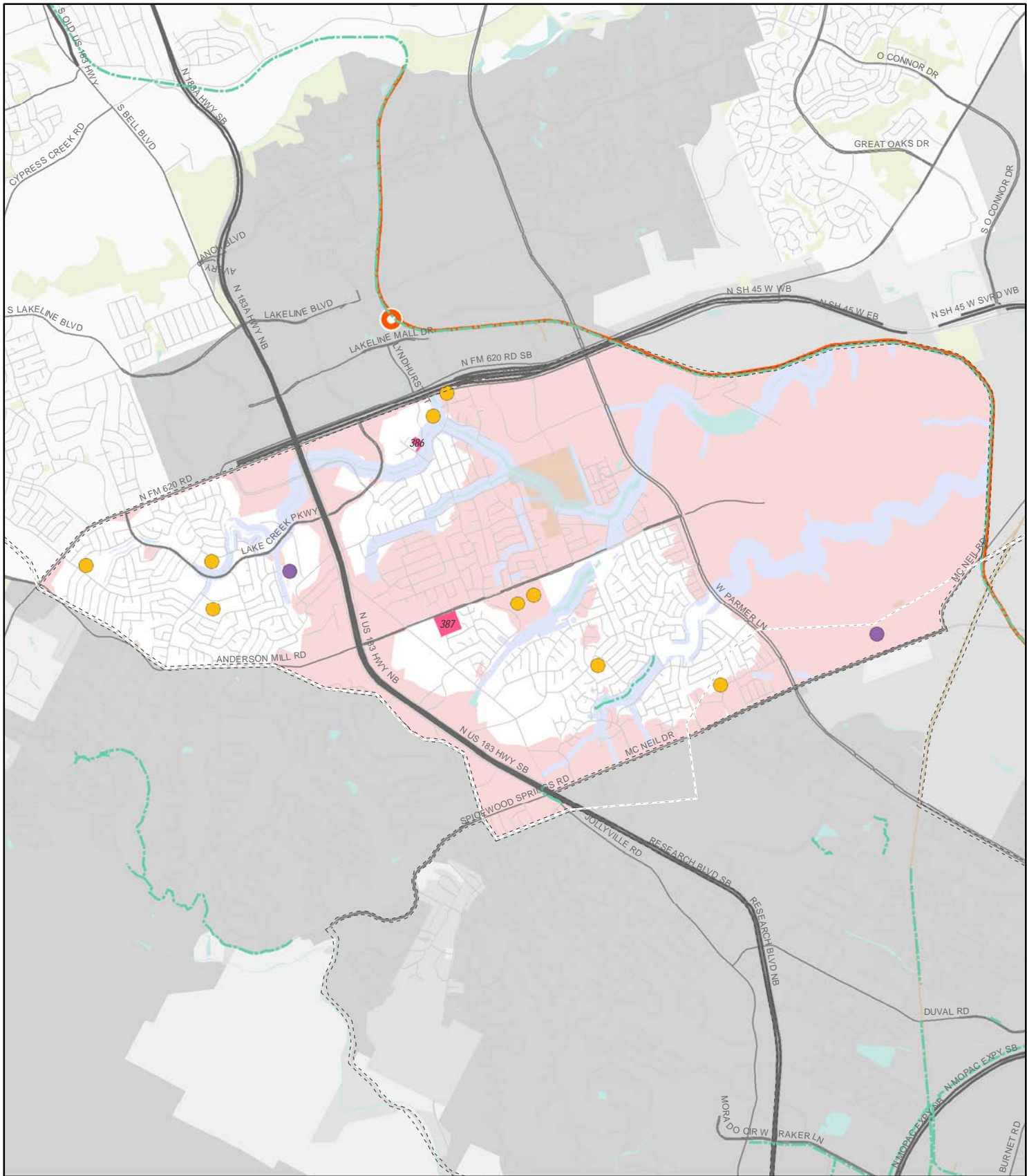




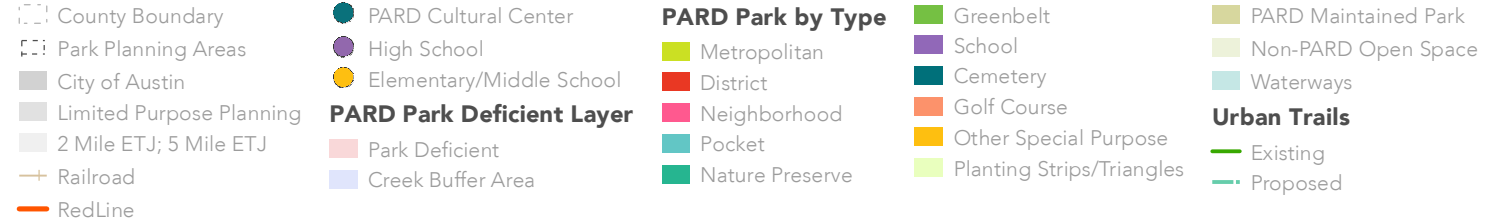
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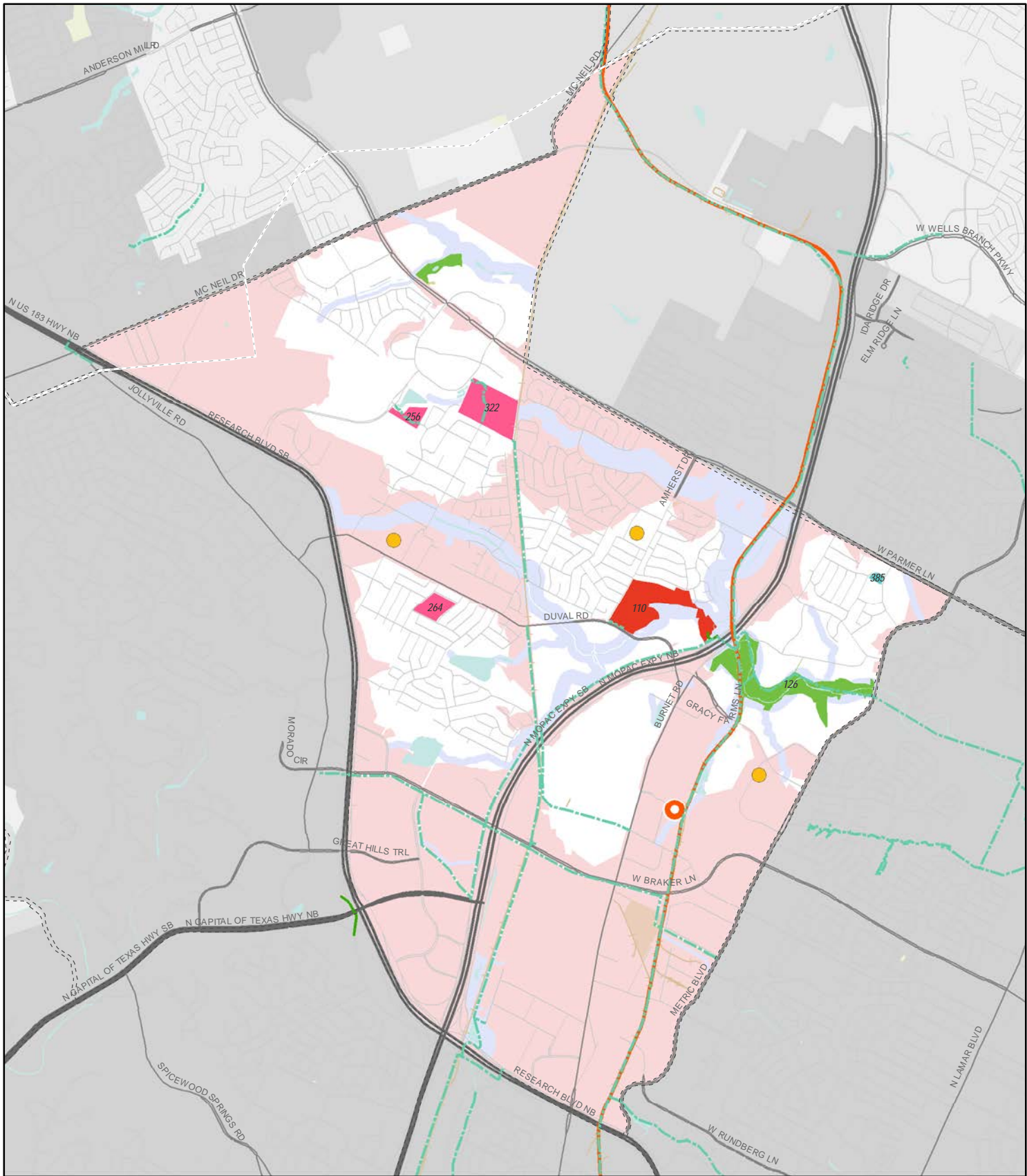
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* Note: To be Completed following final review of combined planning areas



Austin Parks Long Range Plan PARD Planning Area # 5

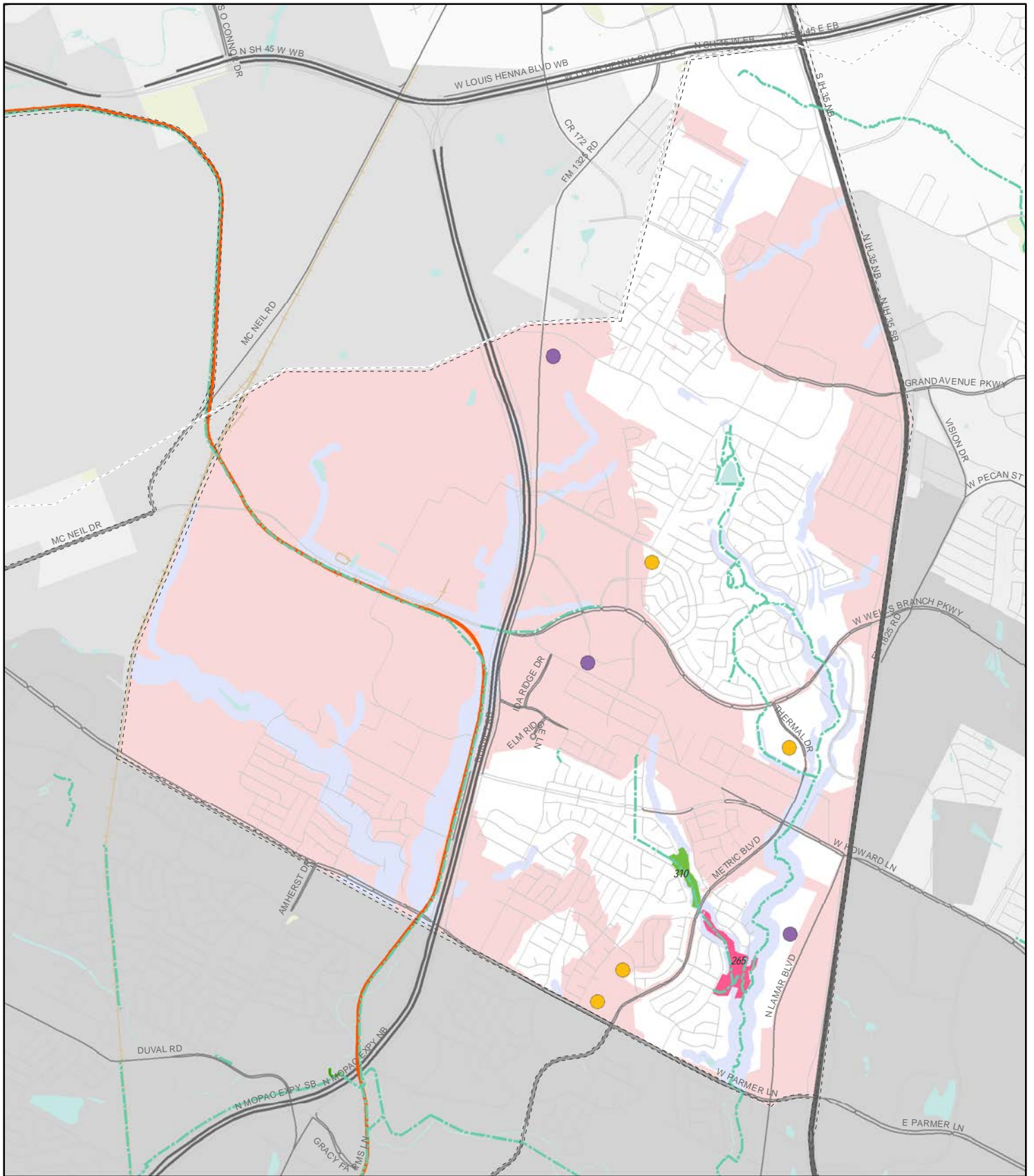




Austin Parks Long Range Plan PARD Planning Area # 6

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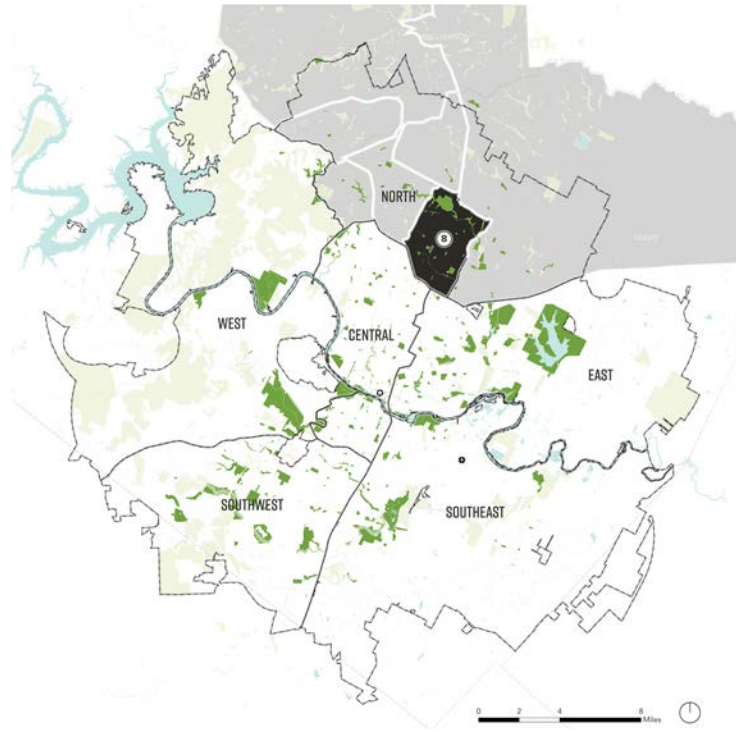
- County Boundary
- Park Planning Areas
- City of Austin
- Limited Purpose Planning
- 2 Mile ETJ; 5 Mile ETJ
- Railroad
- RedLine
- PARD Cultural Center
- High School
- Elementary/Middle School
- PARD Park Deficient Layer**
 - Park Deficient
 - Creek Buffer Area
- PARD Park by Type**
 - Metropolitan
 - District
 - Neighborhood
 - Pocket
 - Nature Preserve
 - Greenbelt
 - School
 - Cemetery
 - Golf Course
 - Other Special Purpose
 - Planting Strips/Triangles
- PARD Maintained Park
- Non-PARD Open Space
- Waterways
- Urban Trails**
 - Existing
 - Proposed



Austin Parks Long Range Plan PARD Planning Area # 7

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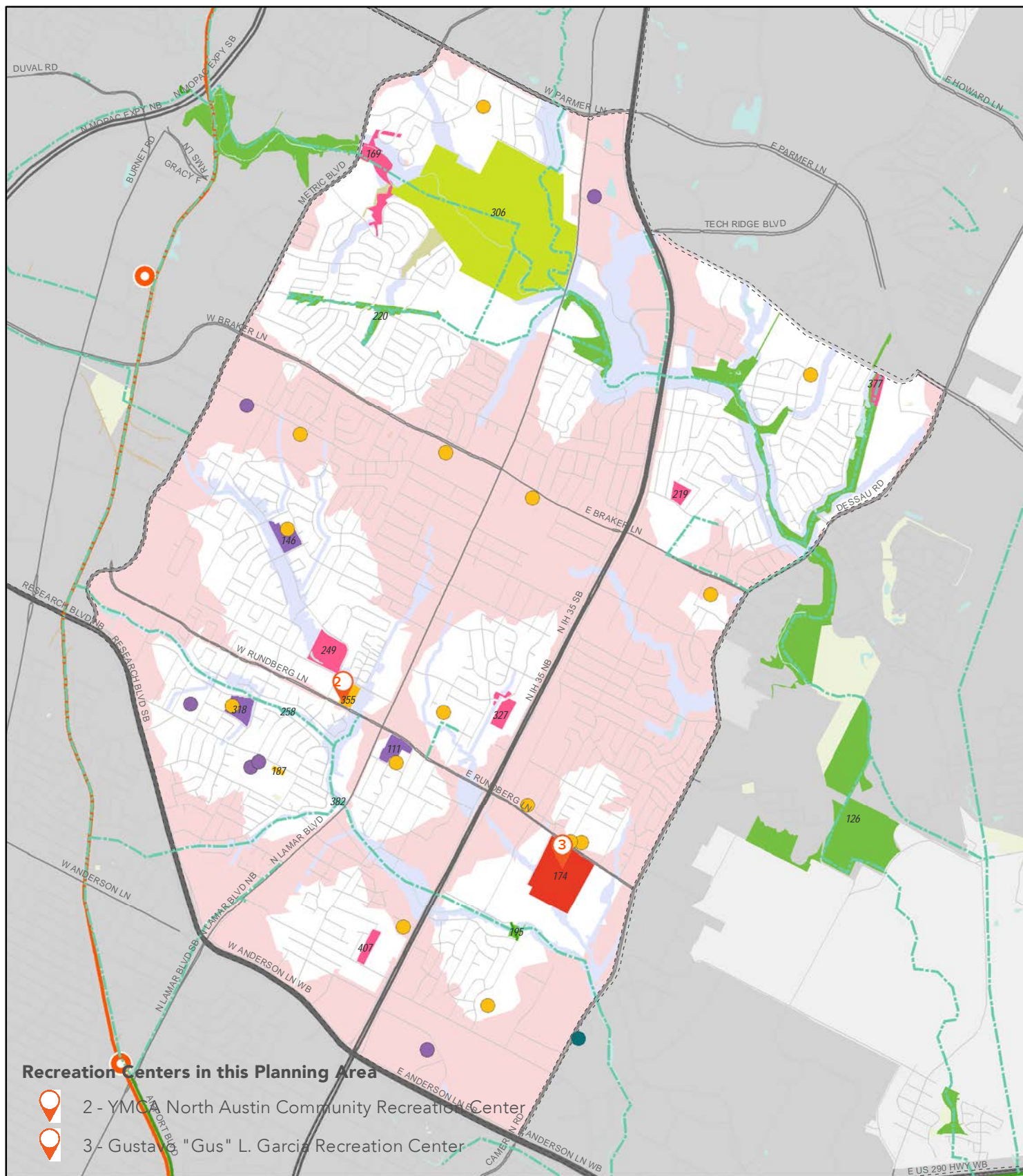
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- Park Planning Areas
- City of Austin
- Limited Purpose Planning
- 2 Mile ETJ; 5 Mile ETJ
- Railroad
- RedLine
- PARD Cultural Center
- High School
- Elementary/Middle School
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 - Golf Course
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- PARD Maintained Park
- Non-PARD Open Space
- Waterways
- Urban Trails**
 - Existing
 - Proposed



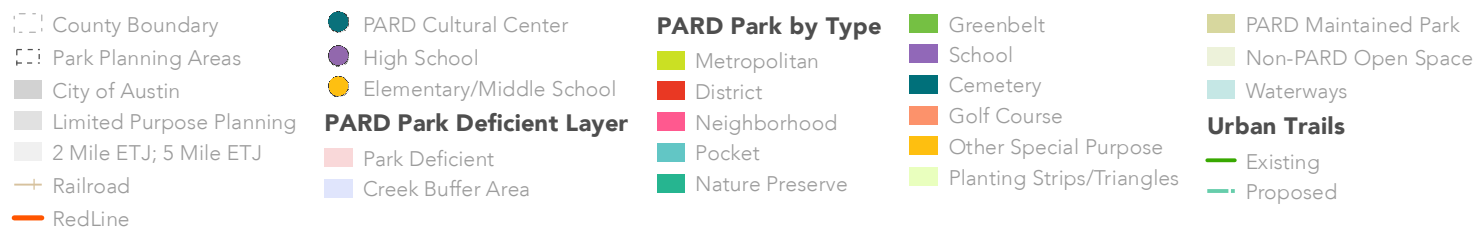
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* Note: To be Completed following final review of combined planning areas

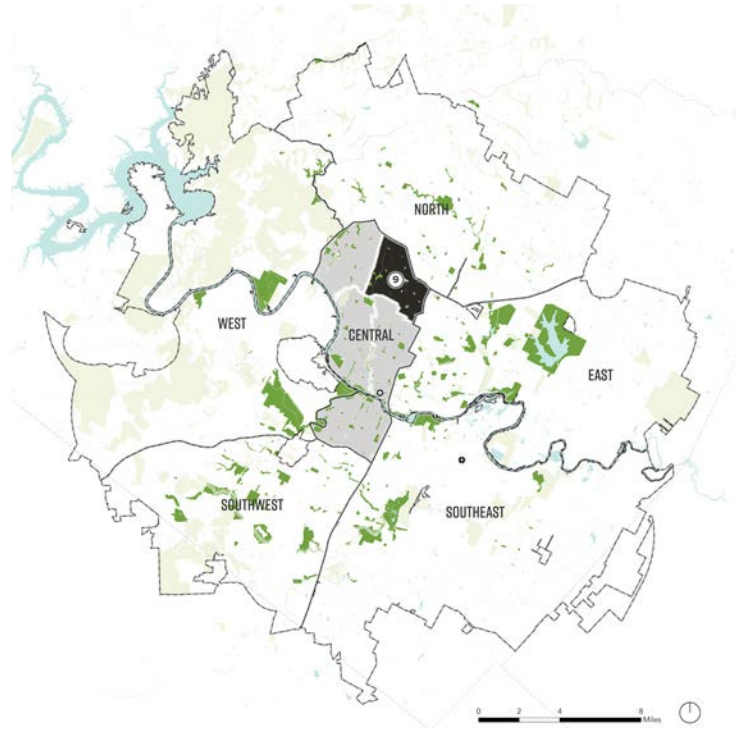


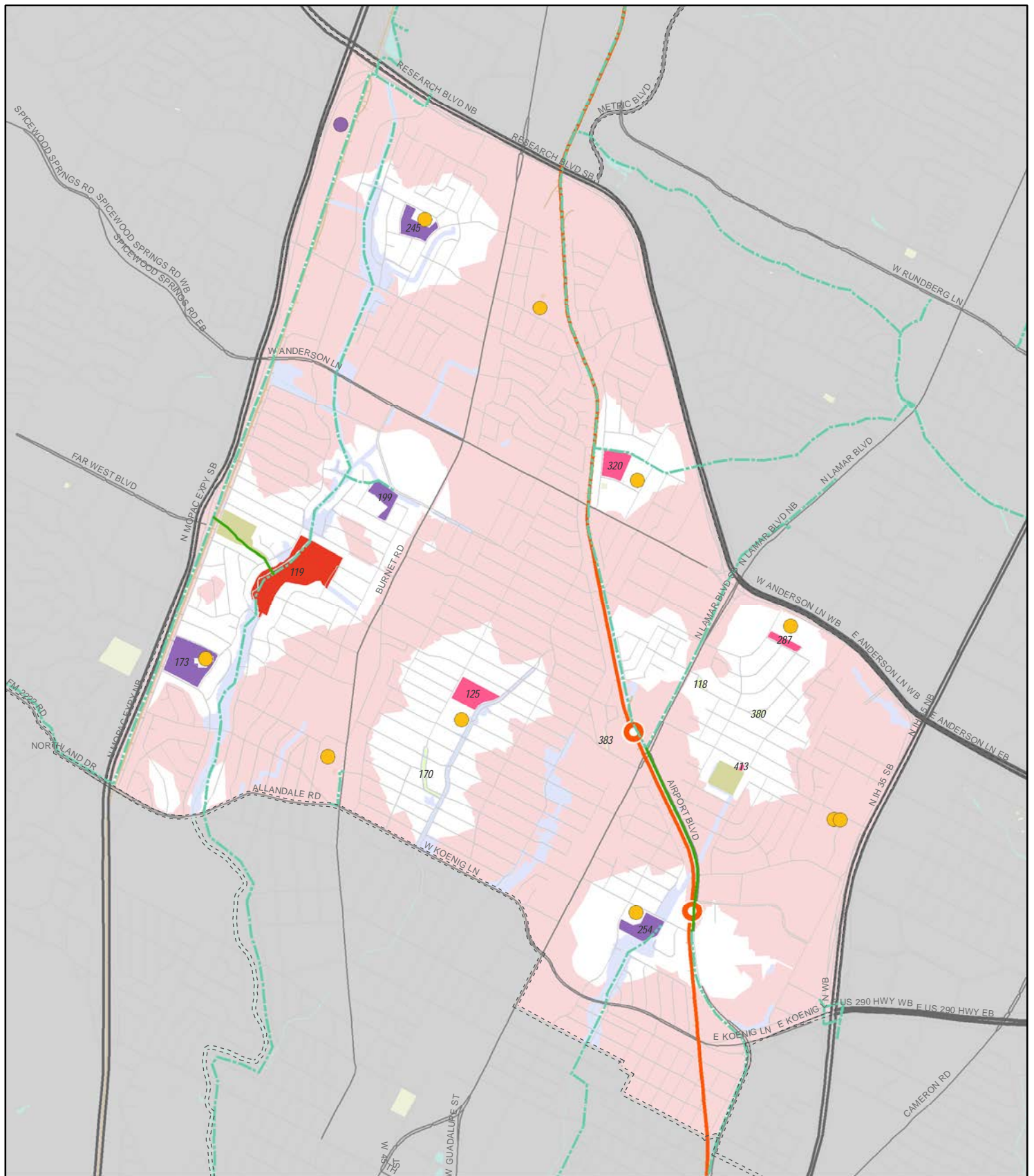
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0 0.15 0.3 0.6 Miles



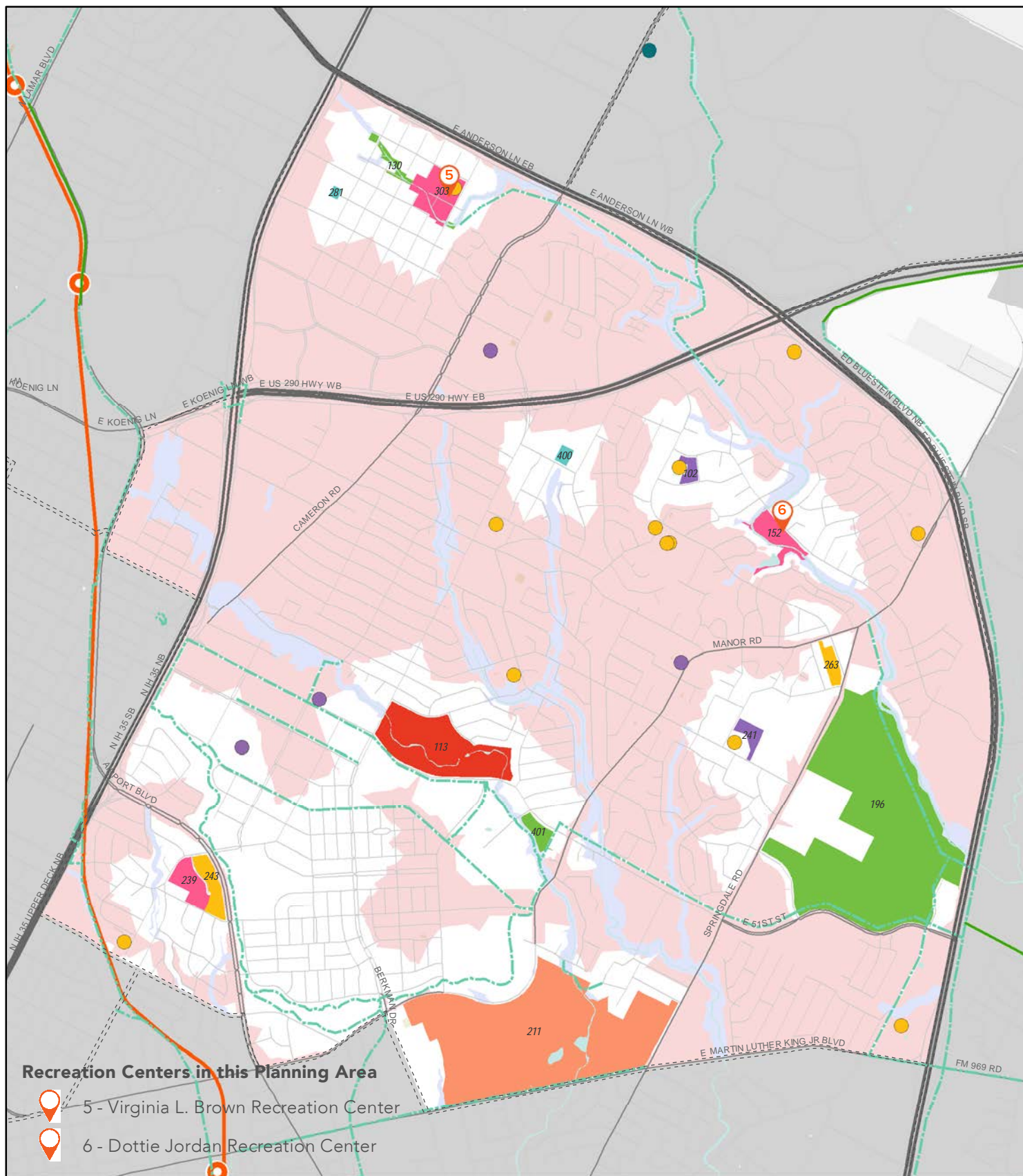
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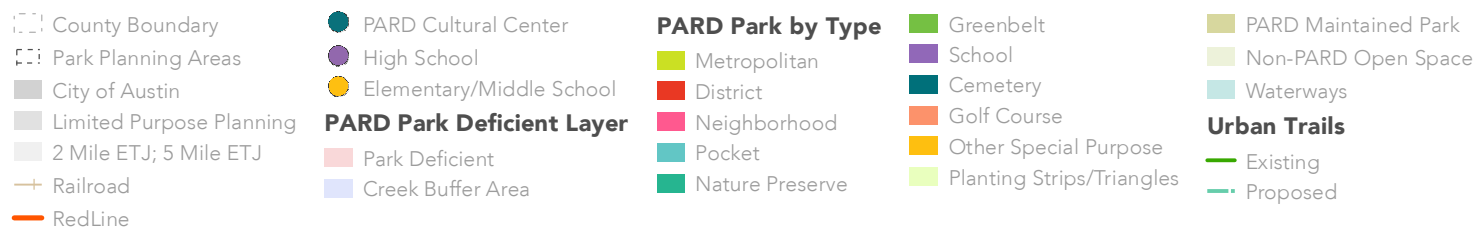
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0 0.125 0.25 0.5 Miles

- County Boundary
- Park Planning Areas
- City of Austin
- Limited Purpose Planning
- 2 Mile ETJ; 5 Mile ETJ
- Railroad
- RedLine
- PARD Cultural Center
- High School
- Elementary/Middle School
- PARD Park Deficient Layer**
 - Park Deficient
 - Creek Buffer Area
- PARD Park by Type**
 - Metropolitan
 - District
 - Neighborhood
 - Pocket
 - Nature Preserve
- Greenbelt
- School
- Cemetery
- Golf Course
- Other Special Purpose
- Planting Strips/Triangles
- PARD Maintained Park
- Non-PARD Open Space
- Waterways
- Urban Trails**
 - Existing
 - Proposed

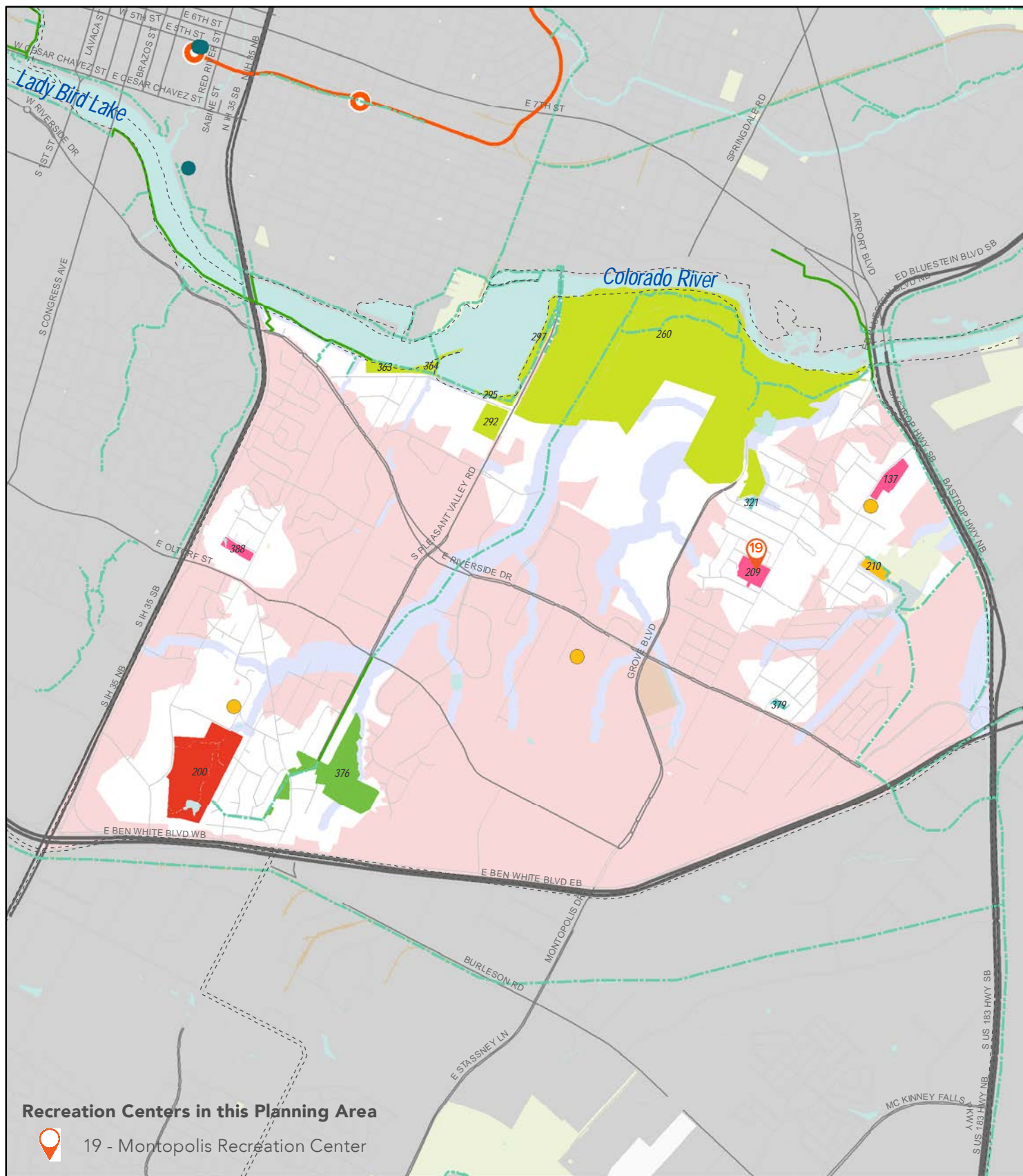


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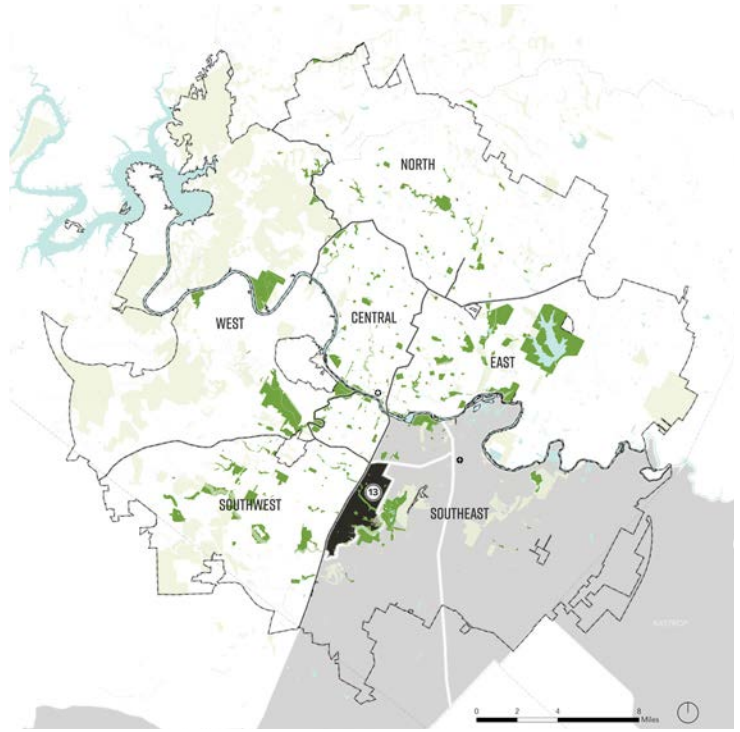


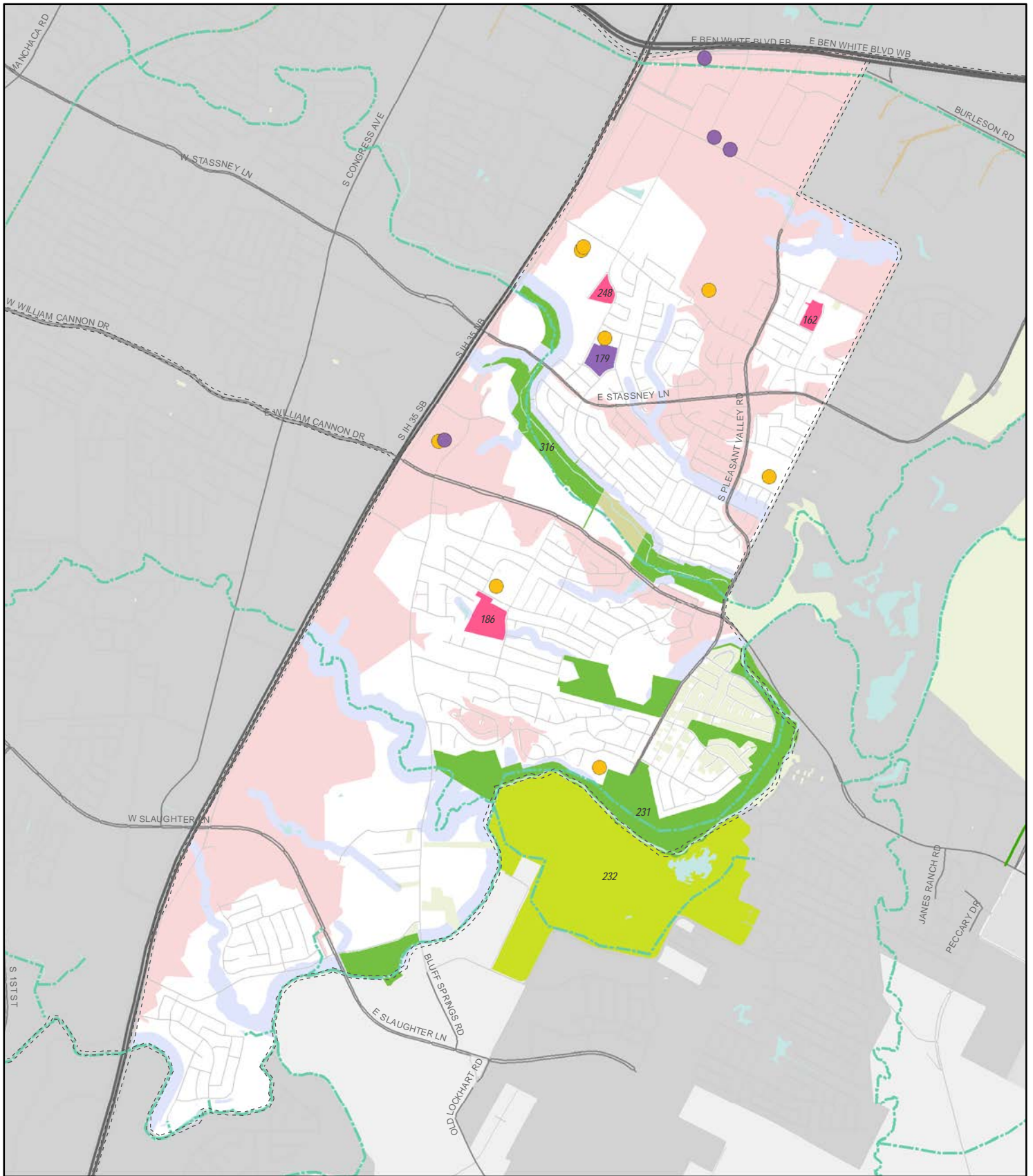
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Austin Parks Long Range Plan PARD Planning Area # 12

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Austin Parks Long Range Plan PARD Planning Area # 13

0 0.125 0.25 0.5 Miles



- County Boundary
- Park Planning Areas

- City of Austin
- Limited Purpose Planning
- 2 Mile ETJ; 5 Mile ETJ
- Railroad
- RedLine

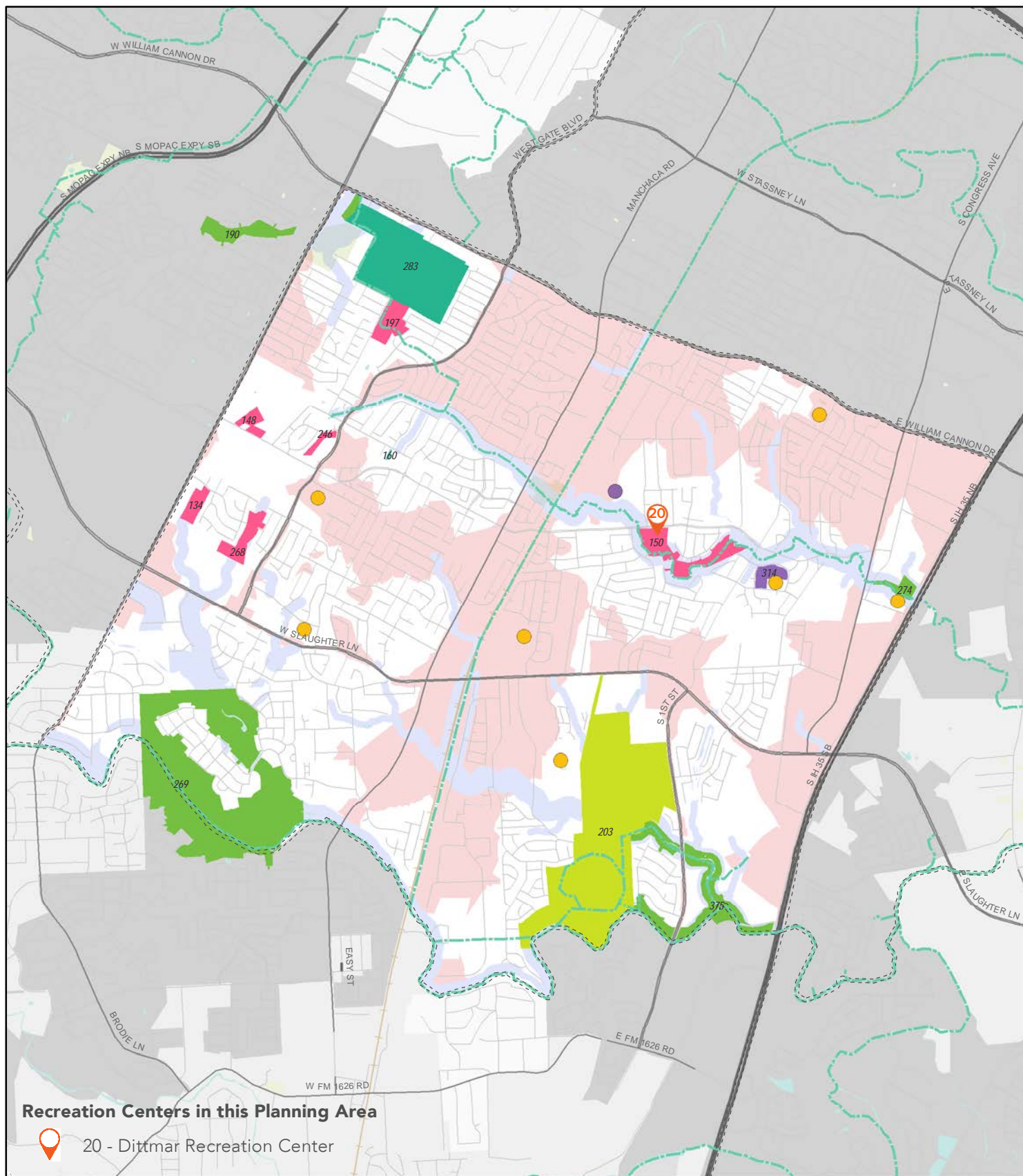
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- High School
- Elementary/Middle School
- PARD Park Deficient Layer**
 - Park Deficient
 - Creek Buffer Area

PARD Park by Type

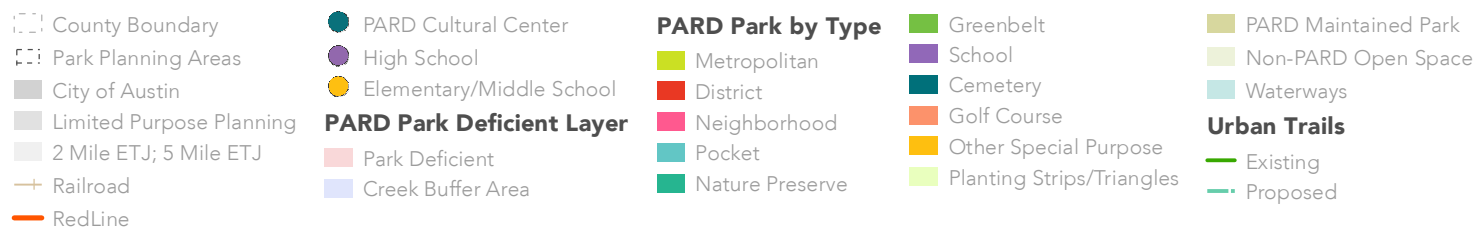
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- District
- Neighborhood
- Pocket
- Nature Preserve

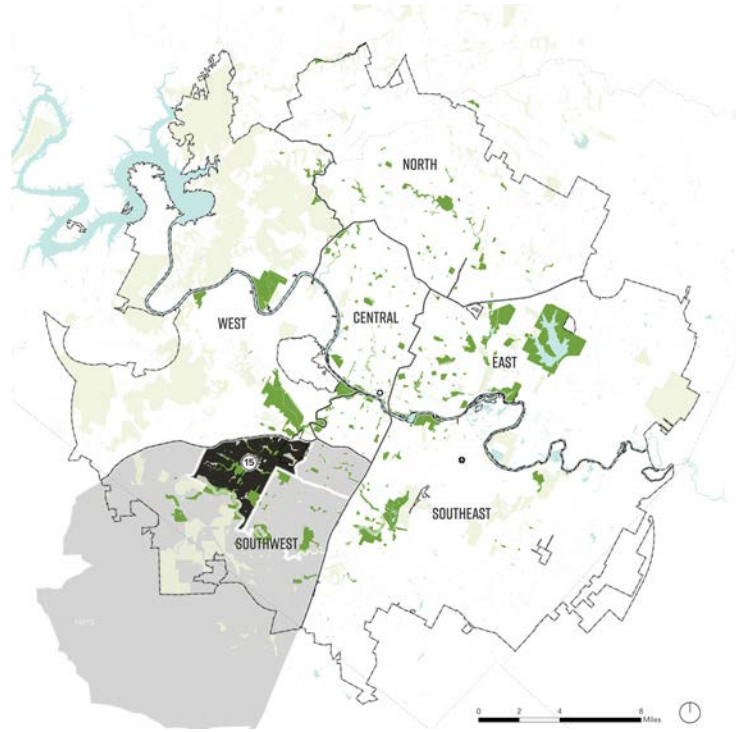
- Greenbelt
- School
- Cemetery
- Golf Course
- Other Special Purpose
- Planting Strips/Triangles

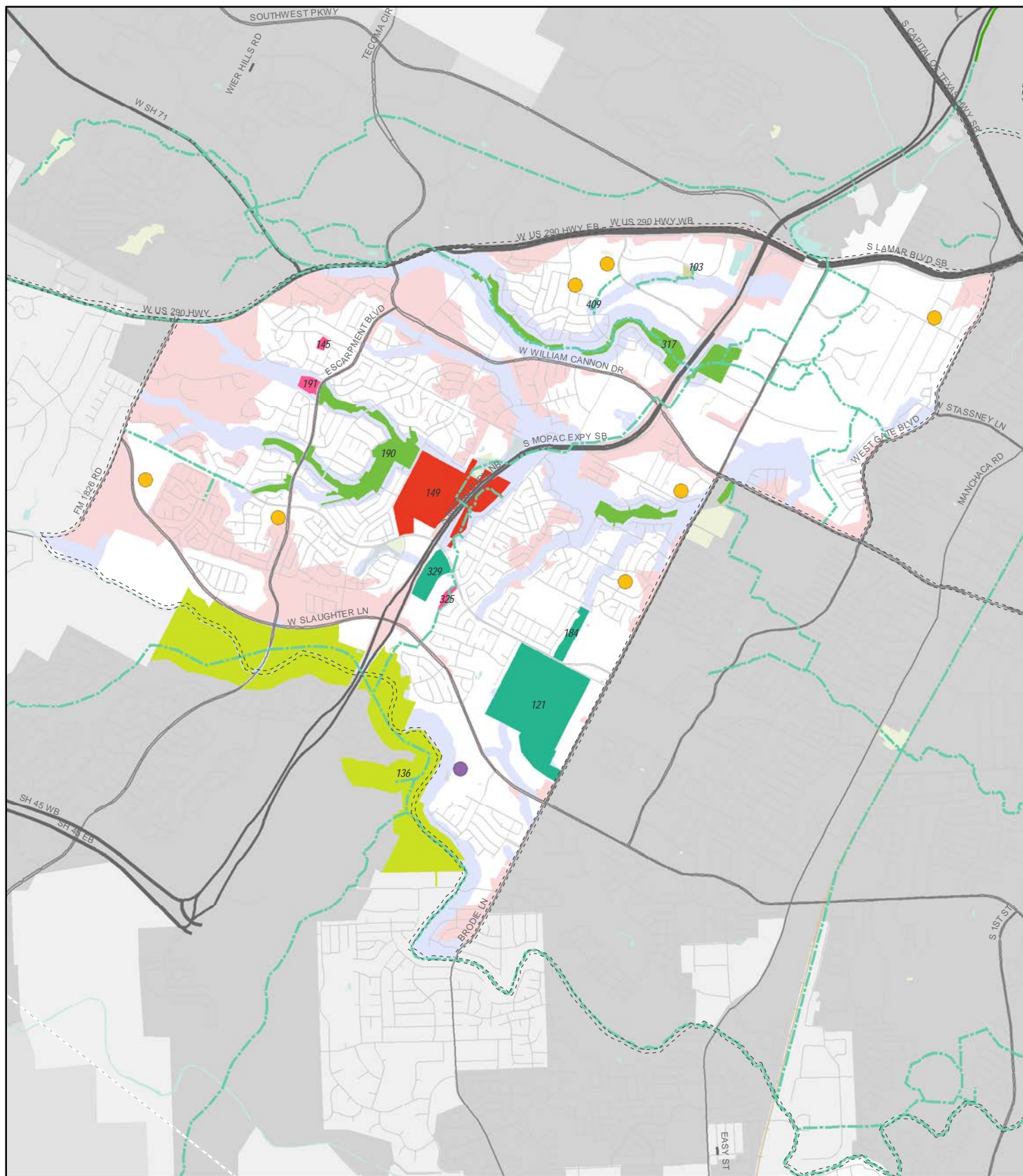
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- Non-PARD Open Space
- Waterways
- Urban Trails**
 - Existing
 - Proposed



Austin Parks Long Range Plan PARD Planning Area # 14



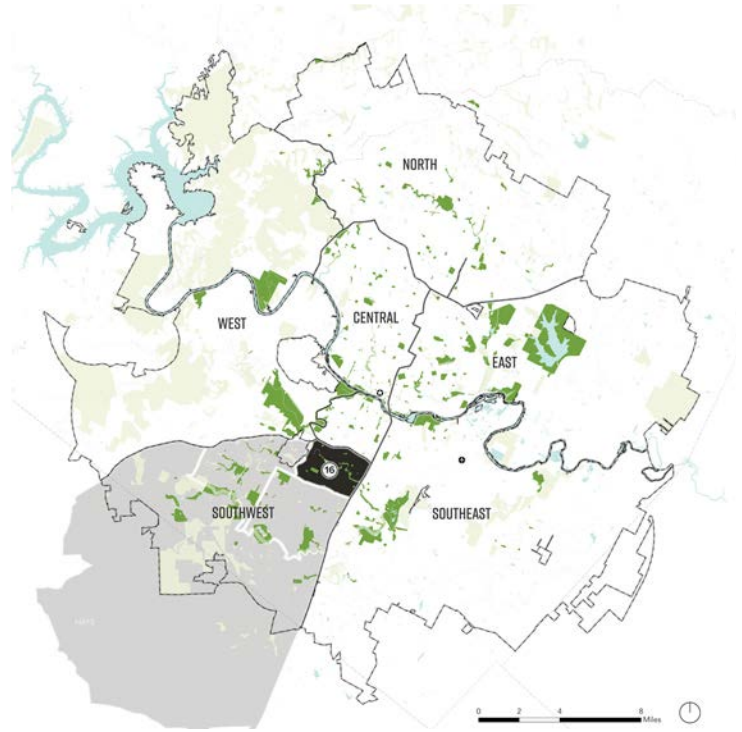
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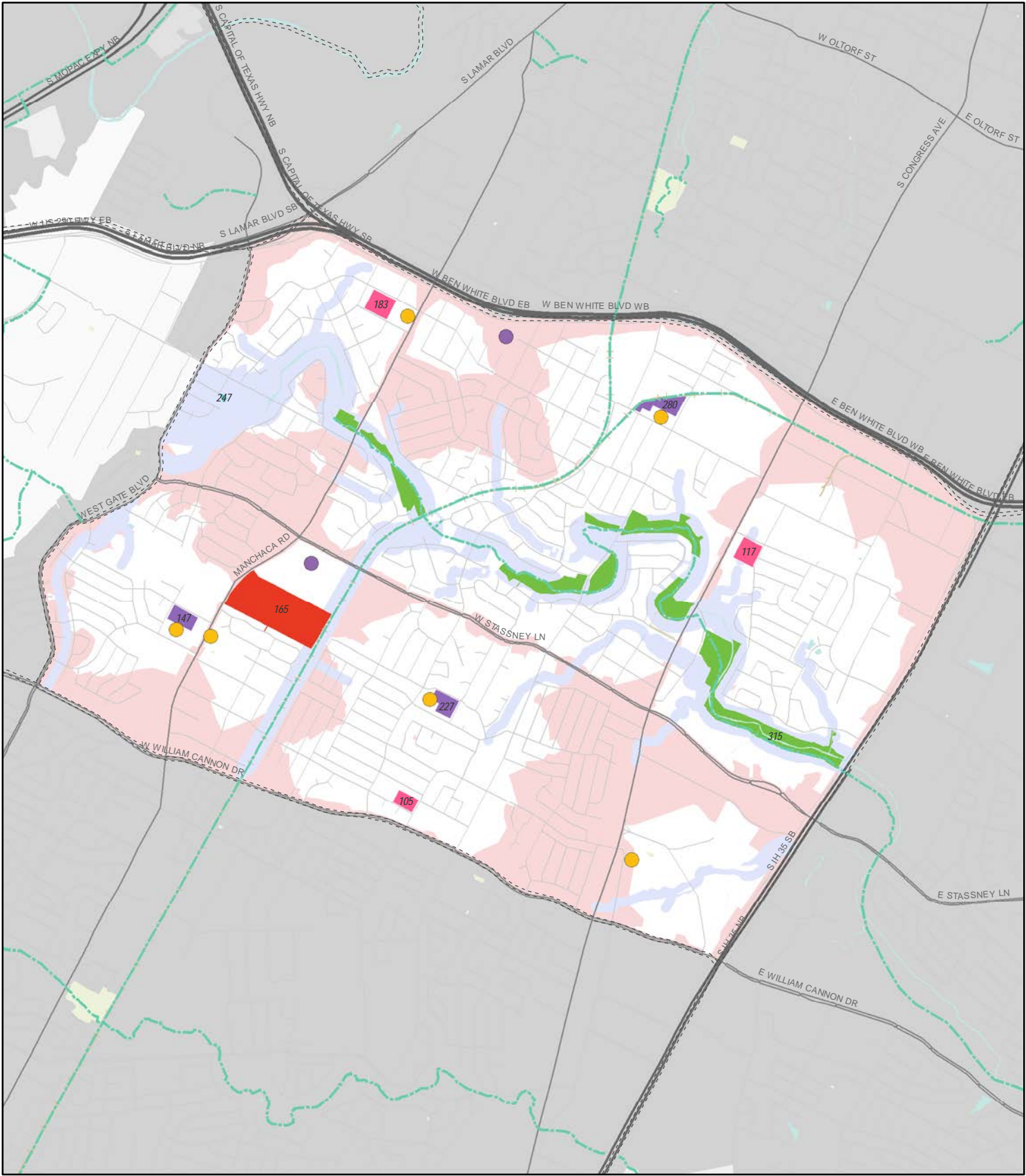


Austin Parks Long Range Plan PARD Planning Area # 15

0 0.2 0.4 0.8 Miles

- County Boundary
- Park Planning Areas
- City of Austin
- Limited Purpose Planning
- 2 Mile ETJ; 5 Mile ETJ
- Railroad
- RedLine
- PARD Cultural Center
- High School
- Elementary/Middle School
- PARD Park Deficient Layer**
 - Park Deficient
 - Creek Buffer Area
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- Cemetery
- Golf Course
- Other Special Purpose
- Planting Strips/Triangles
- PARD Maintained Park
- Non-PARD Open Space
- Waterways
- Urban Trails**
 - Existing
 - Proposed

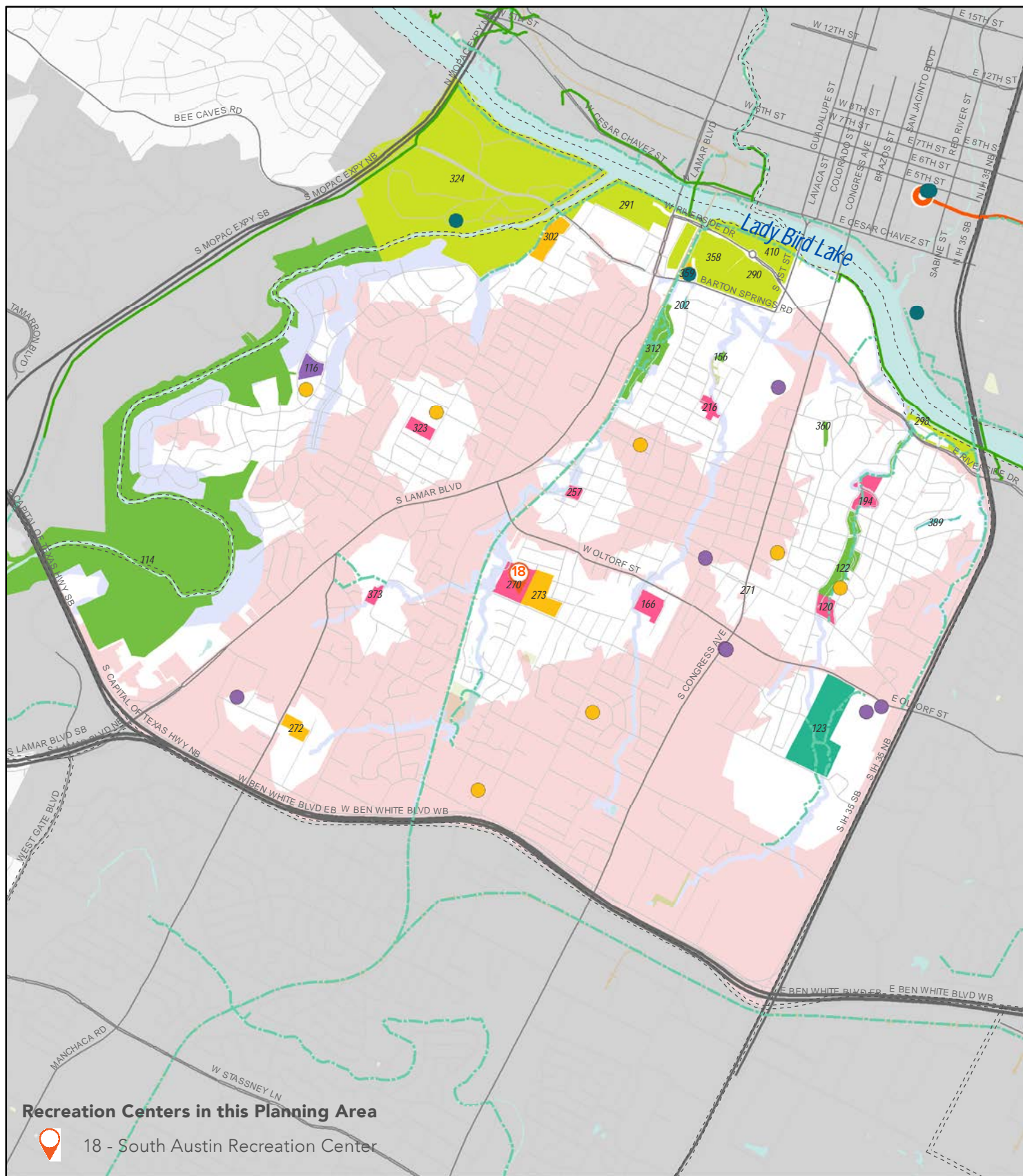
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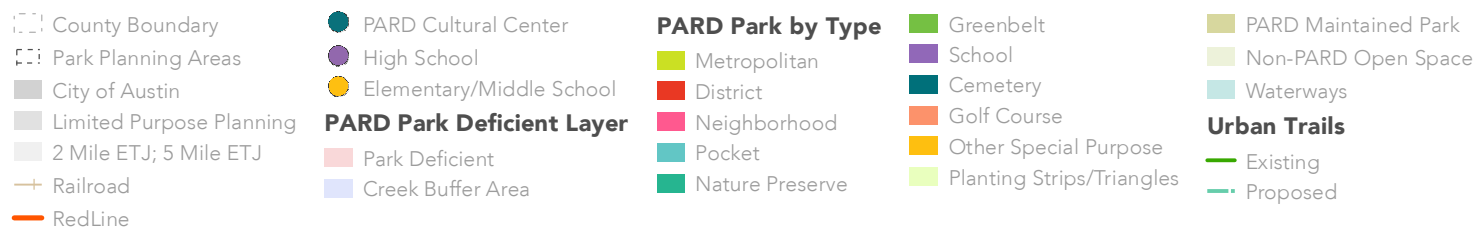
Austin Parks Long Range Plan PARD Planning Area # 16



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| Park Planning Areas | High School | Metropolitan | School | Non-PARD Open Space |
| City of Austin | Elementary/Middle School | District | Cemetery | Waterways |
| Limited Purpose Planning | PARD Park Deficient Layer | Neighborhood | Golf Course | Urban Trails |
| 2 Mile ETJ; 5 Mile ETJ | Park Deficient | Pocket | Other Special Purpose | Existing |
| Railroad | Creek Buffer Area | Nature Preserve | Planting Strips/Triangles | Proposed |
| RedLine | | | | |

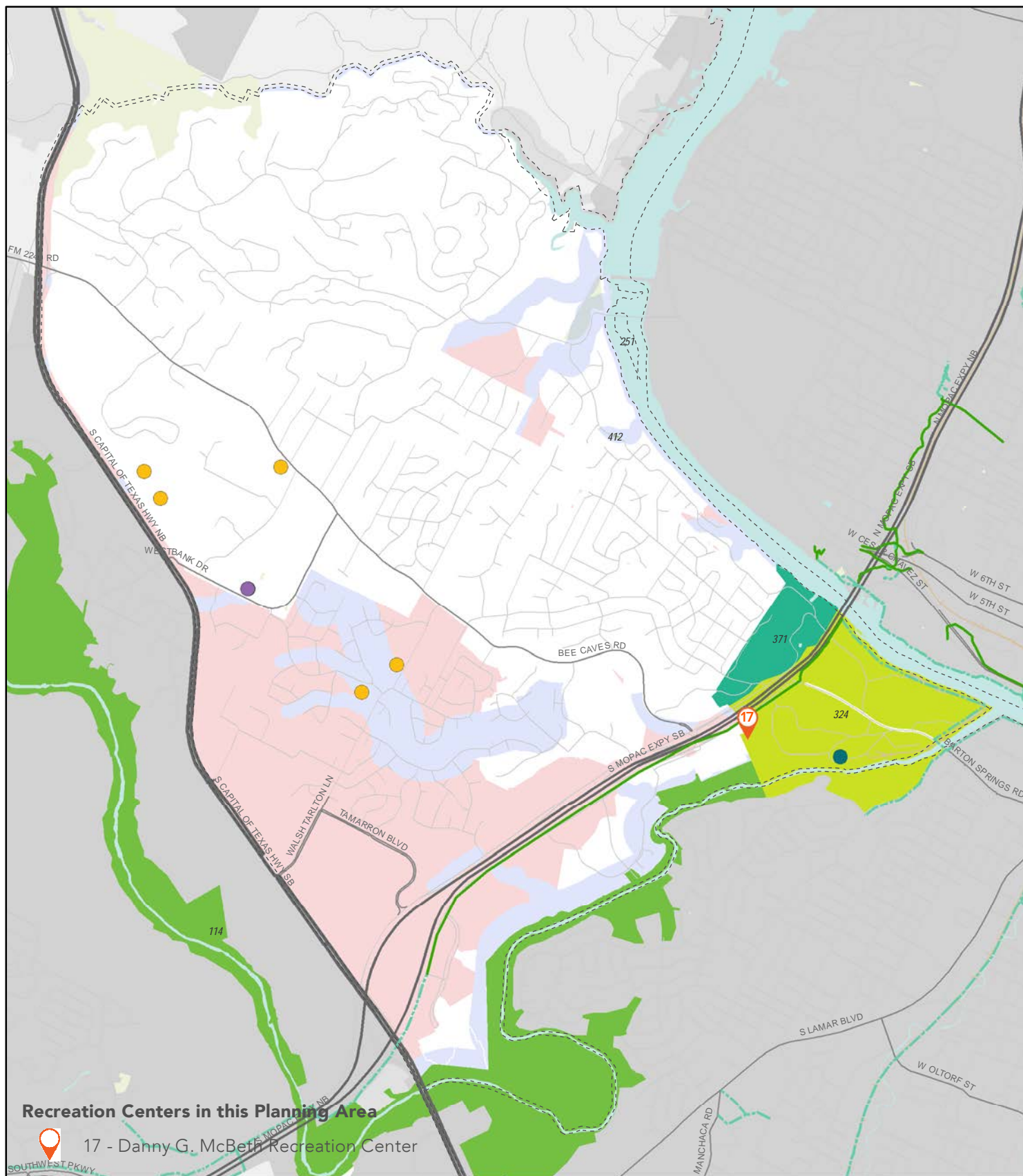


Austin Parks Long Range Plan PARD Planning Area # 17



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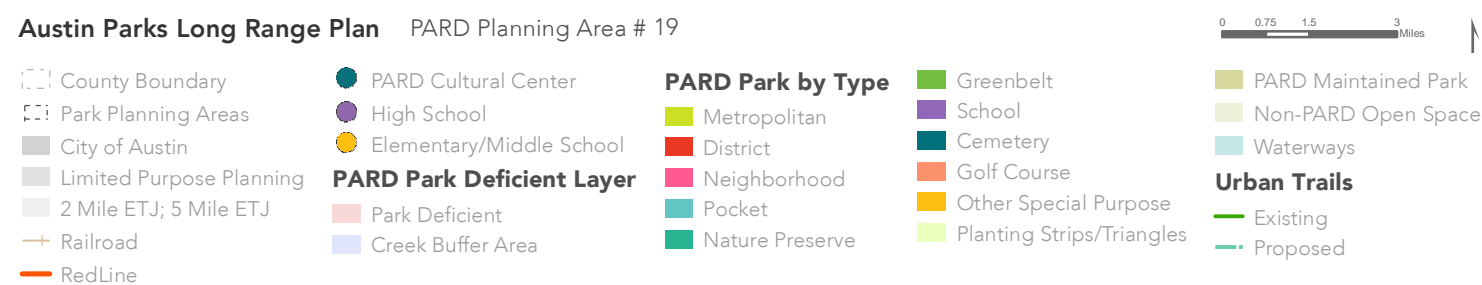




Austin Parks Long Range Plan PARD Planning Area # 18

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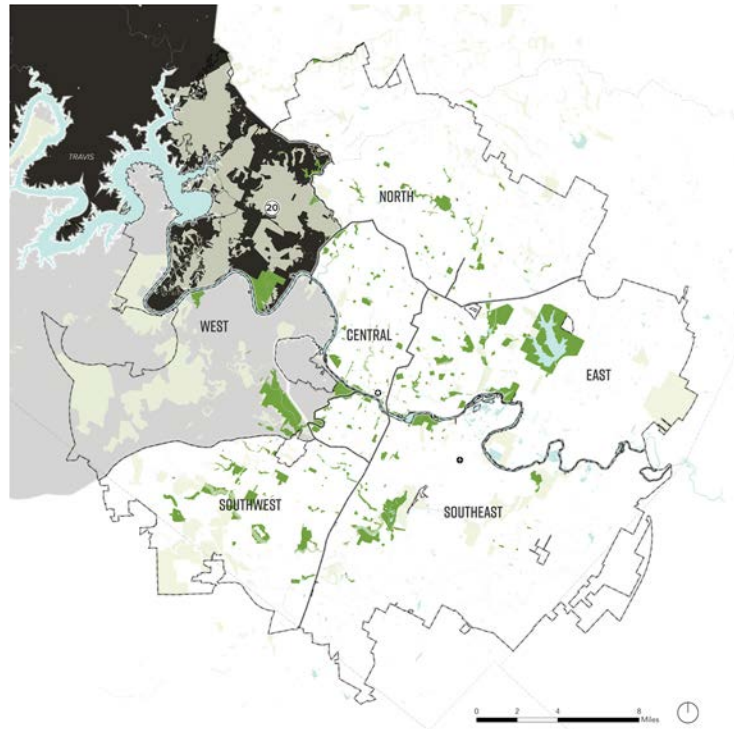
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|---|---|---|--|--|



0 0.75 1.5 3 Miles

- Legend:**

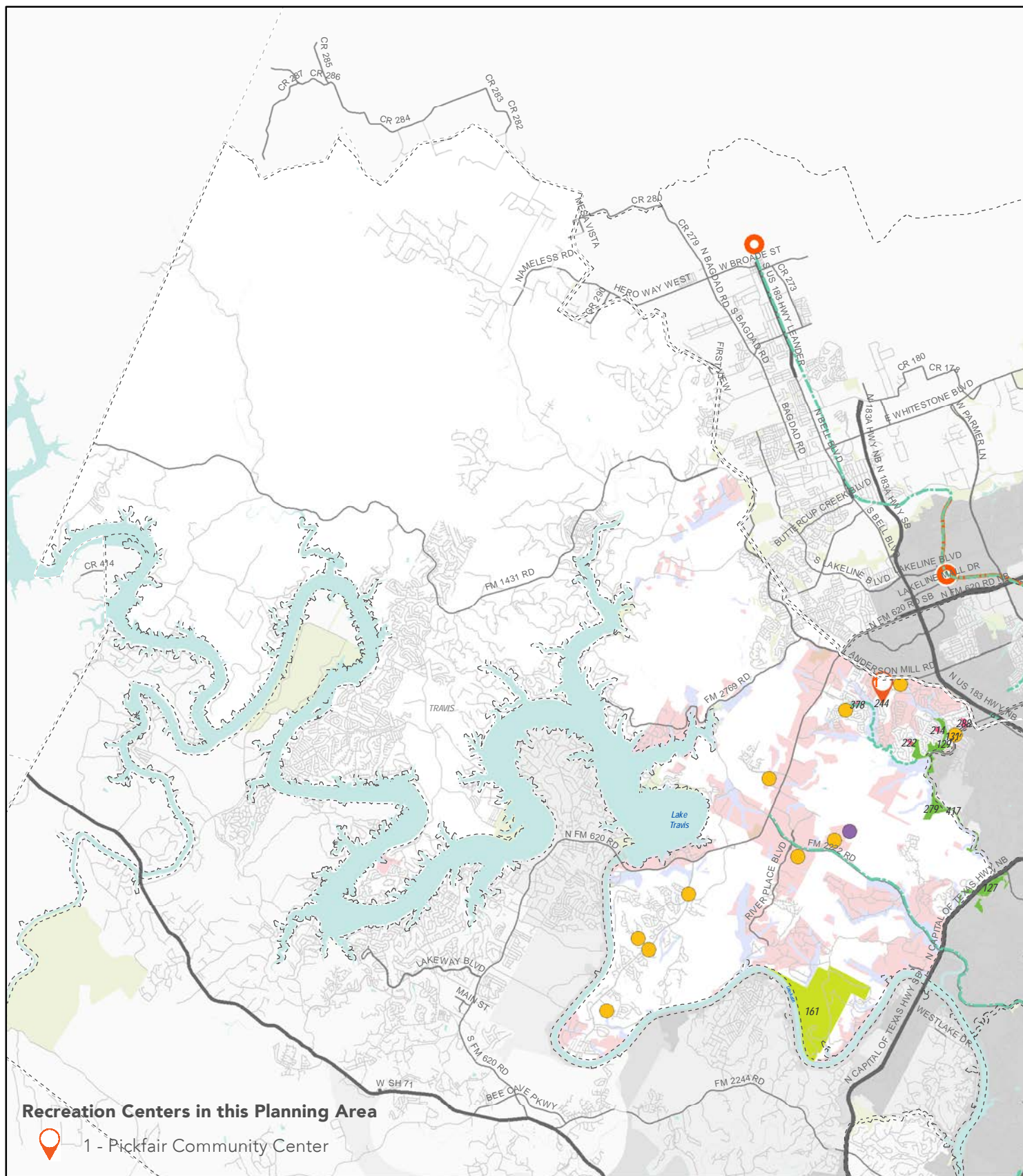
 - County Boundary
 - Park Planning Areas
 - City of Austin
 - Limited Purpose Planning
 - 2 Mile ETJ; 5 Mile ETJ
 - Railroad
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 - PARD Cultural Center
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 - Other Special Purpose
 - Planting Strips/Triangles
 - PARD Maintained Park
 - Non-PARD Open Space
 - Waterways
 - Urban Trails**
 - Existing
 - Proposed



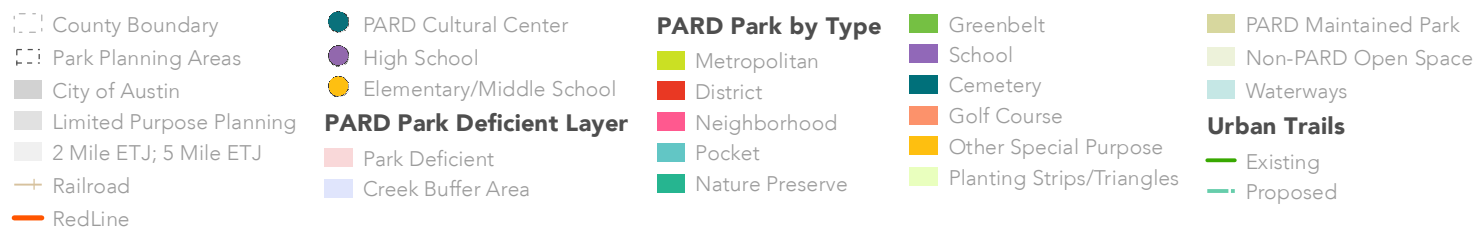
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* Note: To be Completed following final review of combined planning areas



Austin Parks Long Range Plan PARD Planning Area # 20

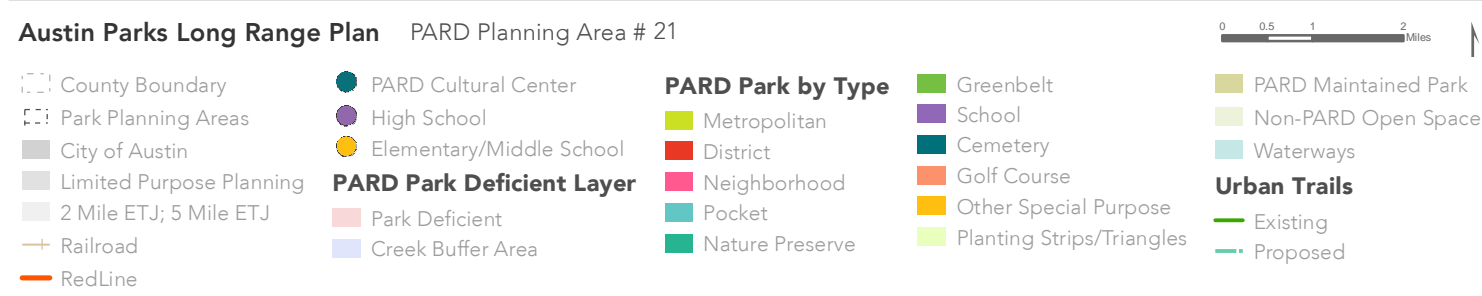


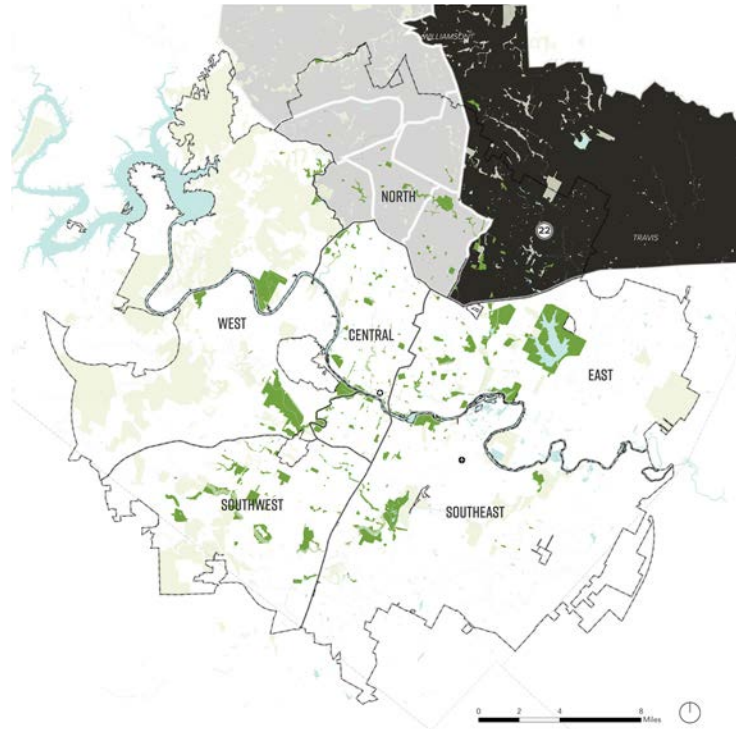


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* Note: To be Completed following final review of combined planning areas

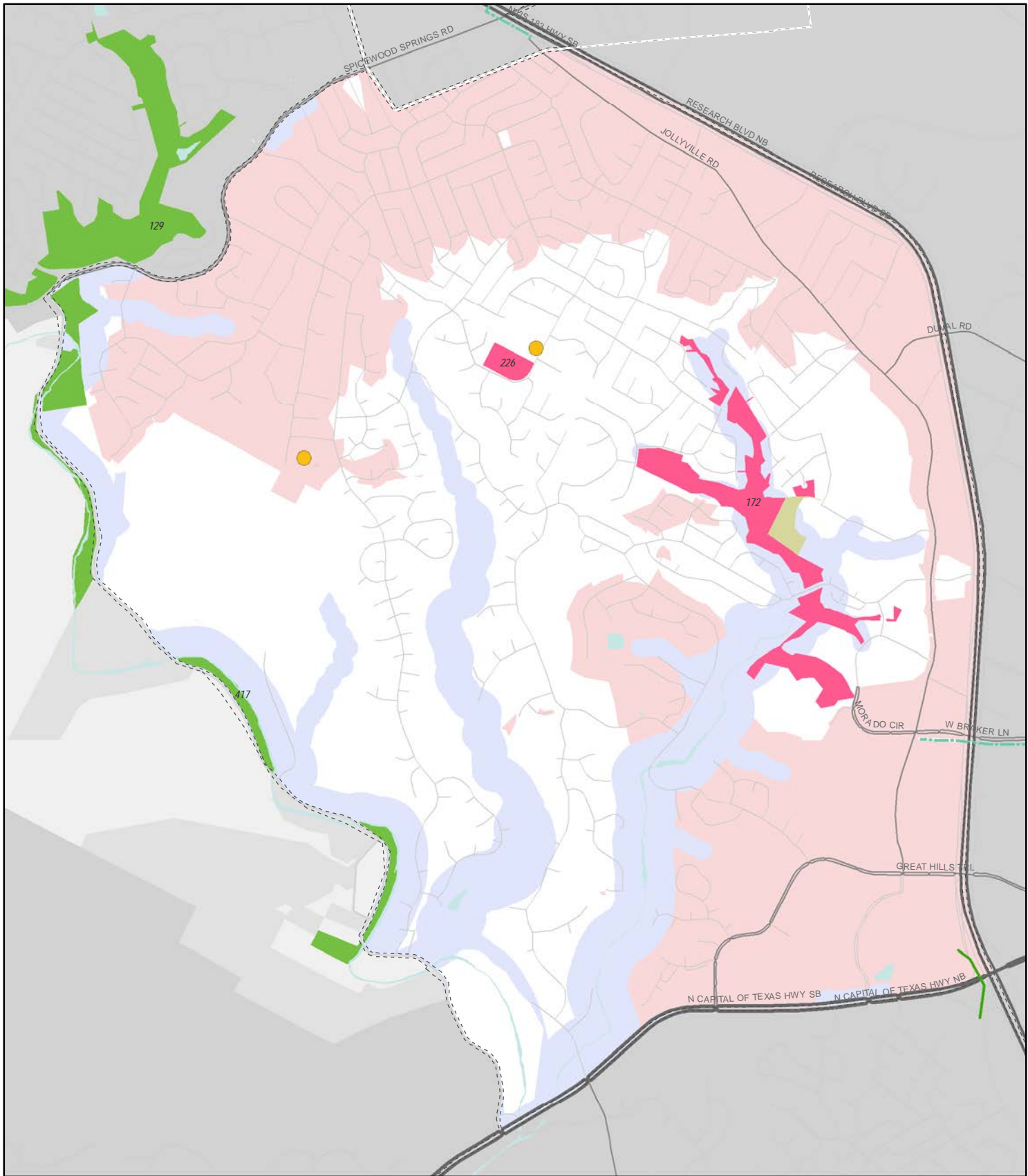




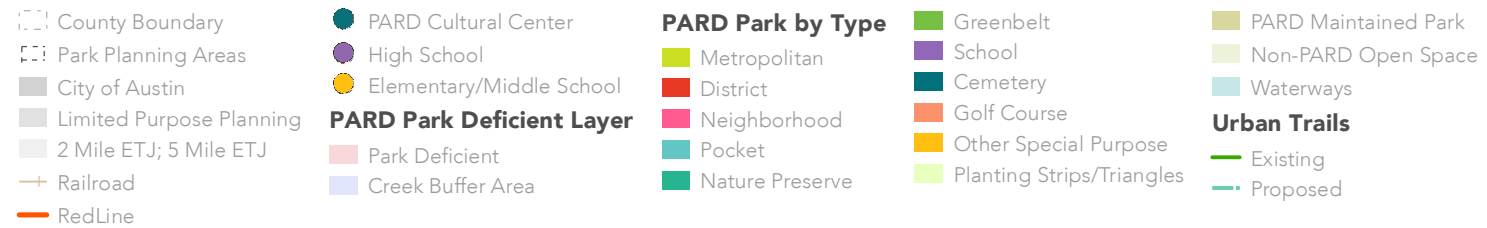
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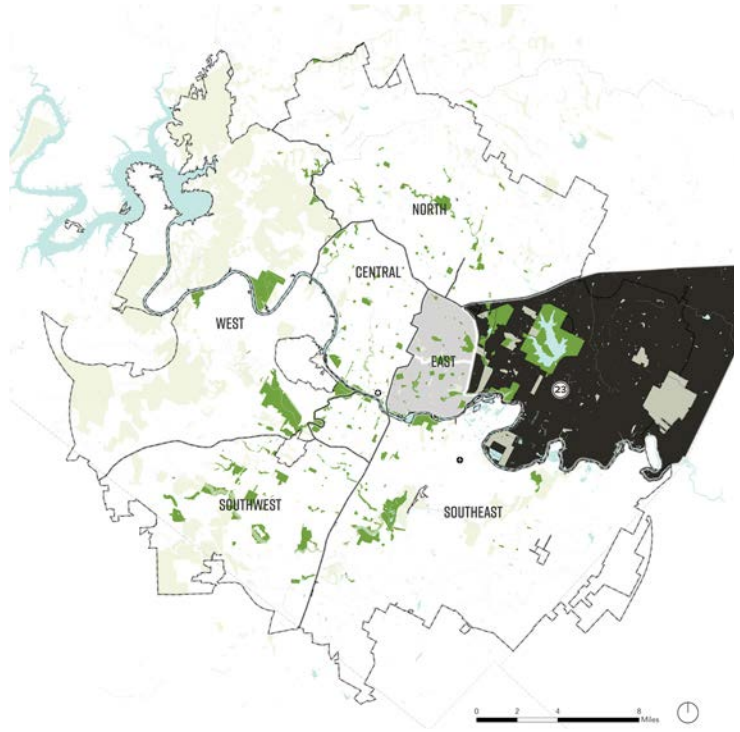
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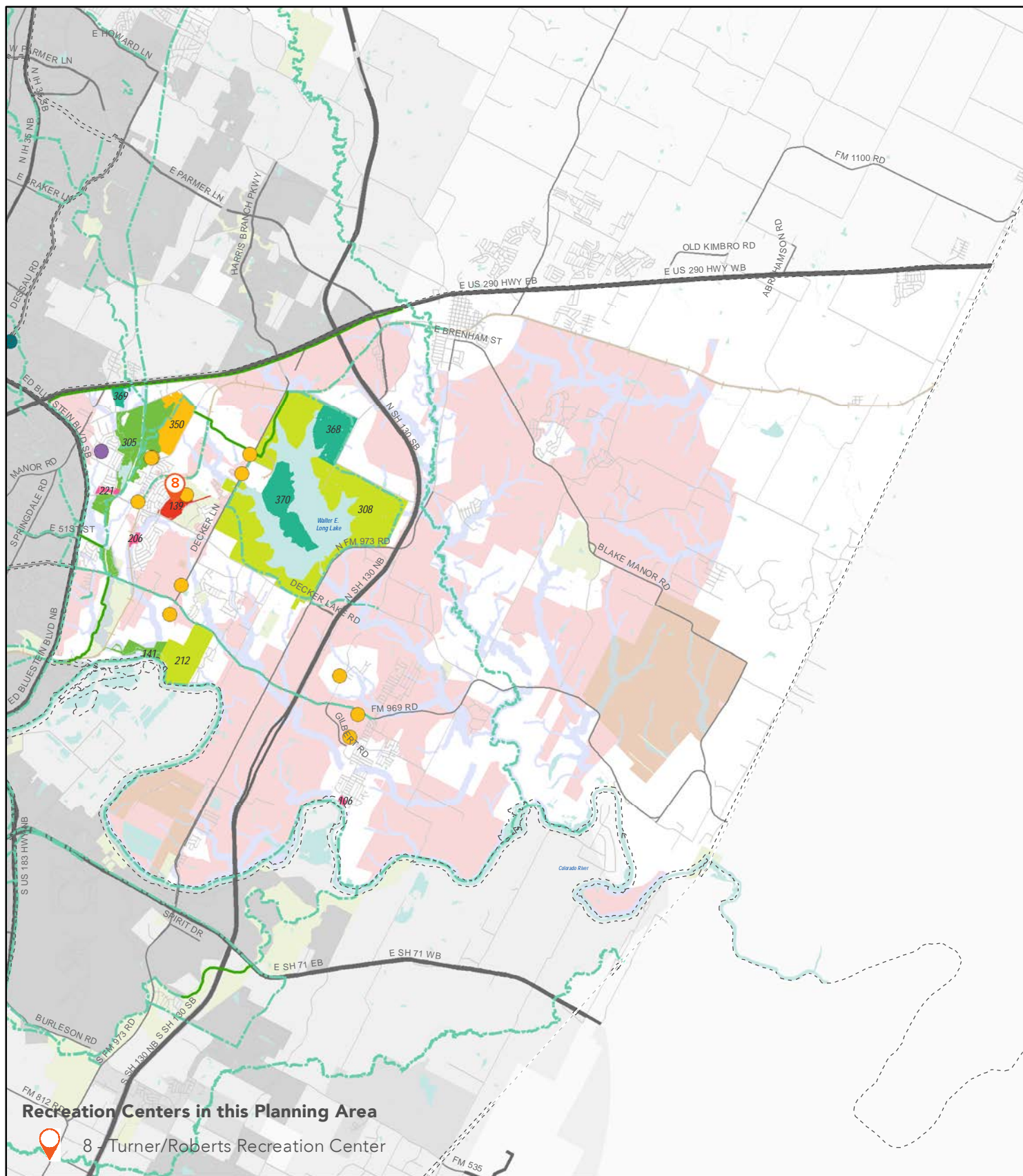
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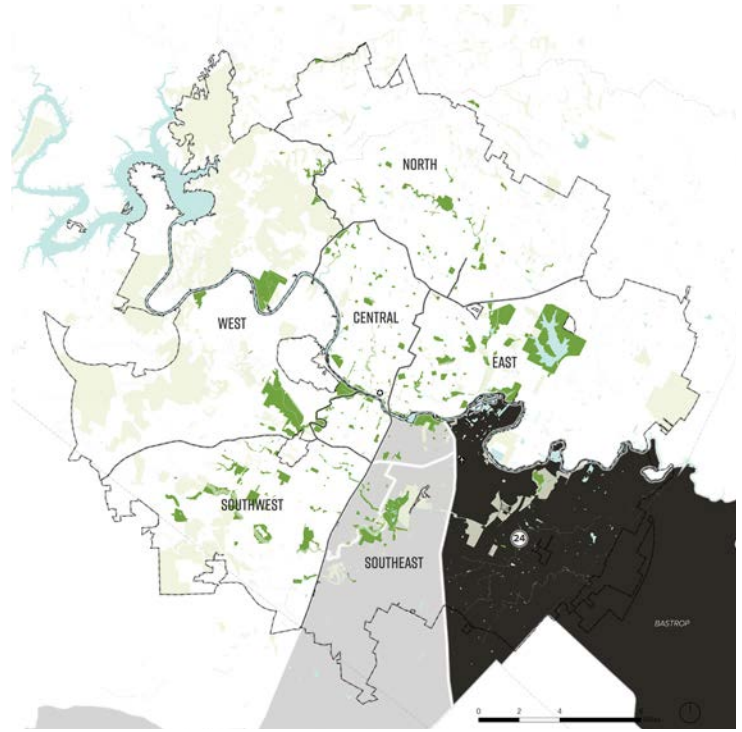
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Austin Parks Long Range Plan PARD Planning Area # 23

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|---|---|---|--|--|
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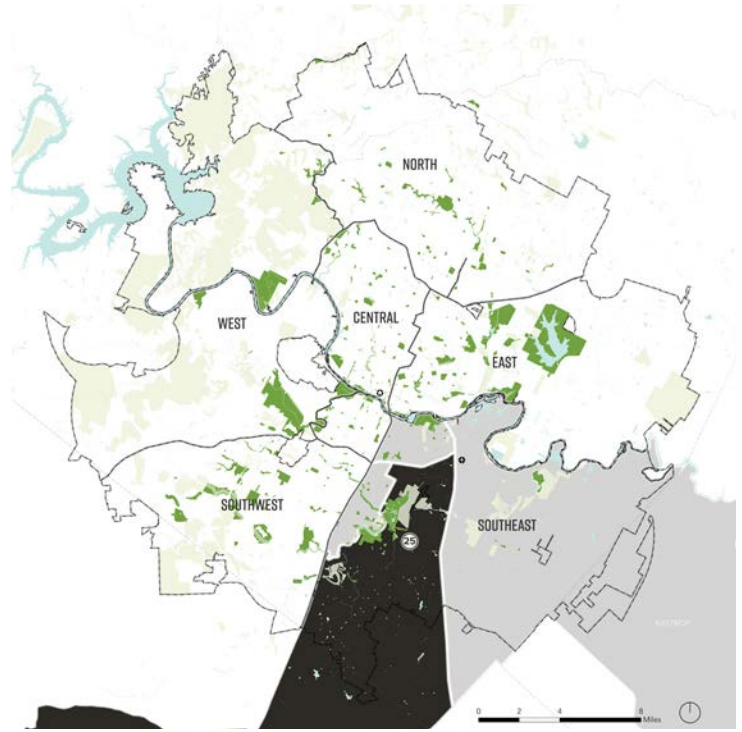
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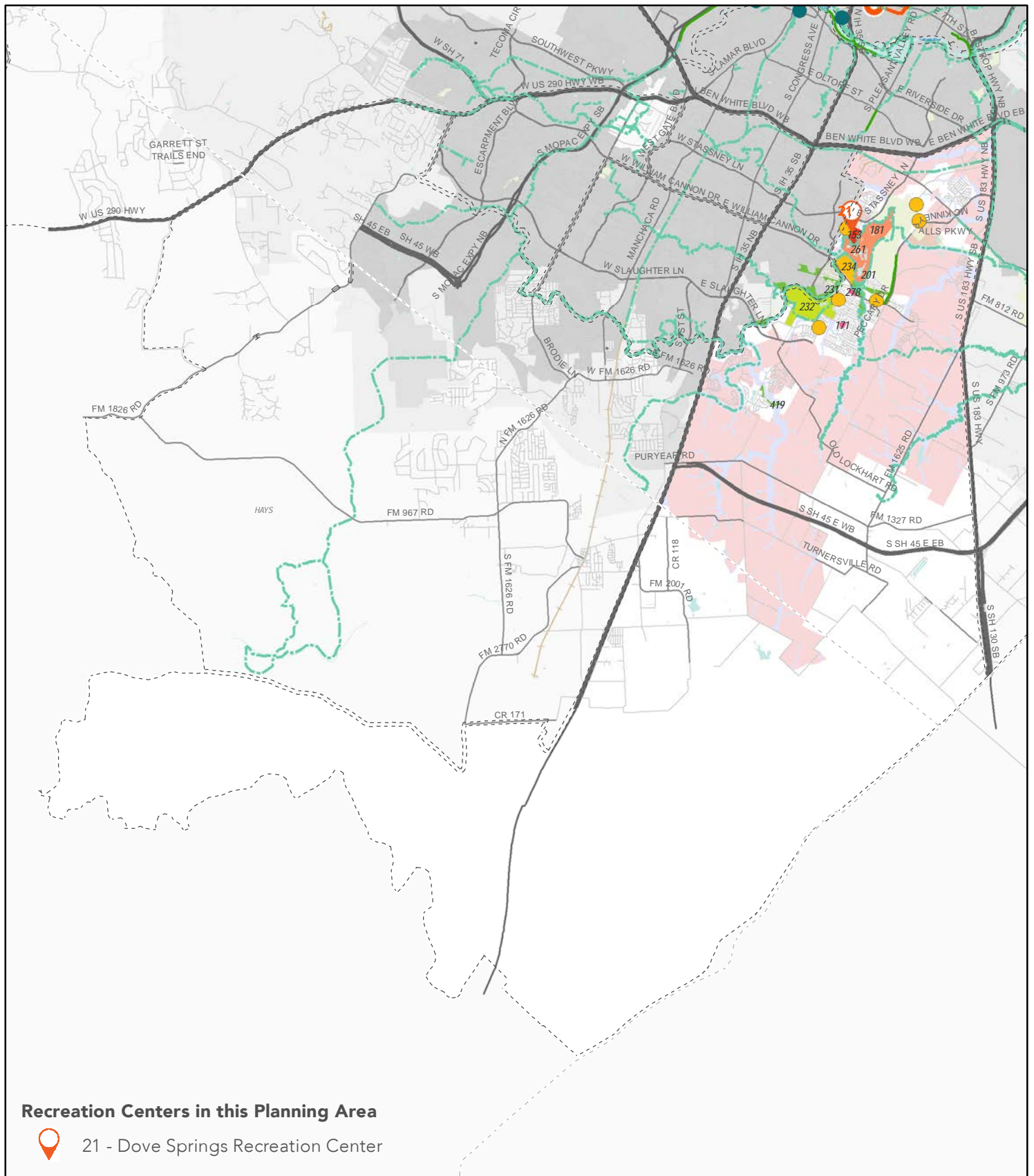
County Boundary PARD Cultural Center



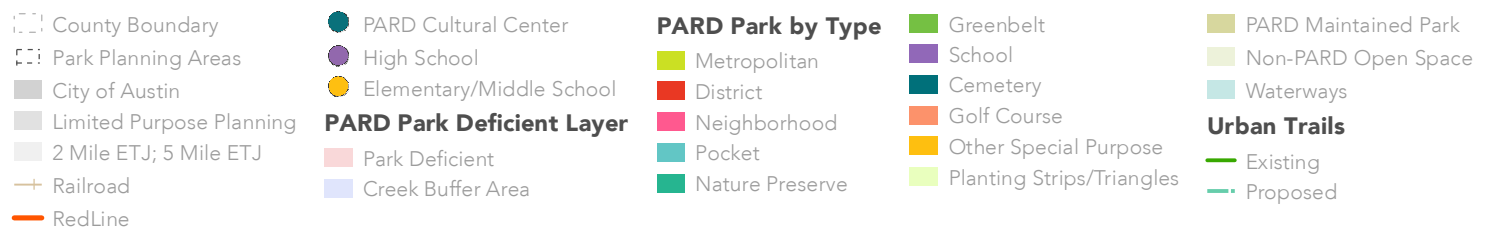
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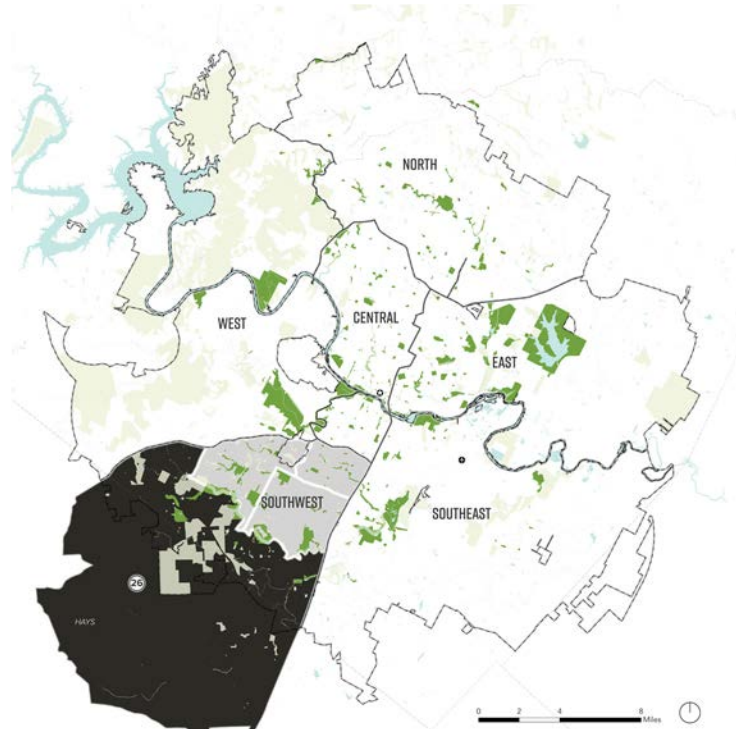


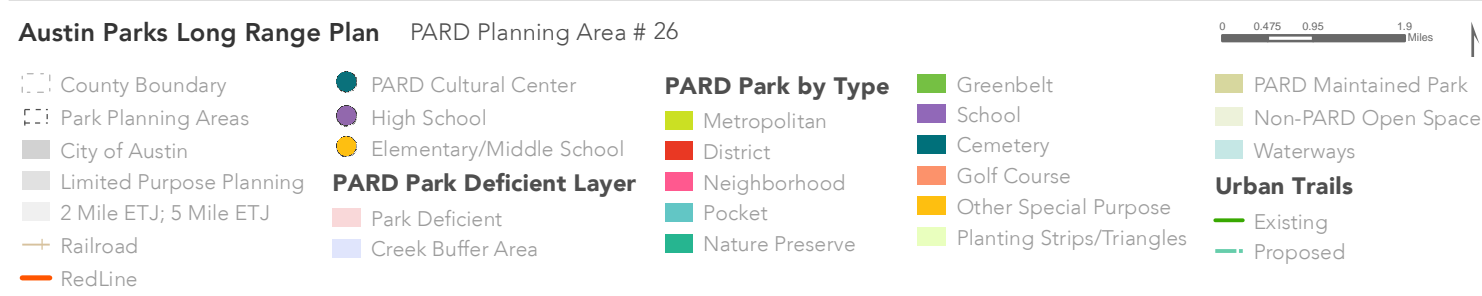
Austin Parks Long Range Plan PARD Planning Area # 25



0 0.5 1 2 Miles



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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

AUSTIN PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

OUR PARKS, OUR FUTURE.



OUR PARKS
OUR FUTURE



AUSTIN PARKS & RECREATION
LONG RANGE PLAN

2018 - 2028

[AUSTINTEXAS.GOV/AUSTINFUTUREPARKS](https://austintexas.gov/austinfutureparks)
[#AUSTINFUTUREPARKS](https://twitter.com/austinfutureparks)



AUSTIN
PARKS
FOUNDATION



IN COLLABORATION WITH:

GO COLLABORATIVE, ADISA COMMUNICATIONS, PROS CONSULTING INC,
STUDIO BALCONES, THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND, ETC INSTITUTE



Runners in Austin. Source: PARD.

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1. INTRODUCTION
2. ENGAGEMENT GOALS, METRICS & OUTCOMES
3. OUTREACH EFFORTS
4. PHASES & TYPES OF ENGAGEMENT
5. SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES TO DATE
- APPENDICES - SURVEY RESULTS

1. INTRODUCTION

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT FOR OUR PARKS, OUR FUTURE

The City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) is developing an update to the Long Range Plan for Land, Facilities, and Programs for the Austin park system, Our Parks, Our Future. The Long Range Plan is developed every 10 years and provides a blueprint to guide land acquisition, capital improvements, and the development of programs and new amenities. The City of Austin's leadership, staff, and partners are committed to involving the community in planning and decision making through a variety of means including in-person meetings, ongoing informal conversations, and the use of technology.

PARD MISSION

PARD's mission is to inspire Austin to learn, play, protect and connect by creating diverse programs and experiences in sustainable natural spaces and public places.

PARD provides community and recreation services, facility and park maintenance, and planning facility construction, and oversees more than 20,000 acres of land.

LRP PLANNING PROCESS GOALS



CREATE A VISION FOR AUSTIN'S PARK SYSTEM IN 2028

This effort will focus on engaging the community and city staff to define a new vision that is both inspirational and achievable.



GUIDE FUTURE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

As Austin continues to grow and change, the Long Range Plan will provide a careful analysis and guidebook for how and where to invest to ensure a world-class park system.



DEVELOP STRATEGIES, ACTIONS, AND PRIORITIES

The Long Range Plan will provide citywide strategies and priorities to inform the Capital Improvement Program and development of Park Master Plans.

OUR PARKS
OUR FUTURE



AUSTIN PARKS & RECREATION
LONG RANGE PLAN

2018 - 2028

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[#AUSTINFUTUREPARKS](https://twitter.com/AUSTINFUTUREPARKS)

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

@AUSTINCITYPARKS   

2. ENGAGEMENT GOALS, METRICS & OUTCOMES

As the city's blueprint for new and improved parkland and recreation in Austin for the next ten years, it is critical that Austin PARD staff hear from as many people as possible while the plan is being developed. In addition, the planning horizon of 2028 presents an exciting opportunity for storytelling and celebrating Austin's park system, as it coincides with the 100-year anniversary of city's Parks and Recreation Department, which was created in February 1928.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GOALS

Within this context, the goals for community engagement include:

1. Create a fun, culturally sensitive, inclusive and engaging process that celebrates Austin's parks and recreation facilities and educates the community about the value of Austin parks and recreation;
2. Design a public engagement process that captures the public perception of current and future needs for the city's park system and results in the development of the Parks and Recreation core values and Long Range Plan priorities;
3. Involve a wide range of ages, races, ethnicities and hard-to-reach residents in the plan by providing multiple ways for the public to engage, including variety in location and timing of events; and providing opportunities for engagement to happen within the context of a person's everyday activities.
4. Involve PARD employees from various divisions in community engagement to provide perspective on the various programs that PARD provides; help PARD staff understand resident needs and priorities; and assist in developing the core values and priorities for the Plan.

As community engagement activities are planned, they will be tied back to the goals of the Public Engagement Plan.

METRICS TO EVALUATE OUTREACH & EQUITY

The primary methods PARD and the consultant team will use to evaluate success include: asking participants to provide their demographic information through surveys and assessing how well the planning process is reaching Austin's less engaged, hard-to-reach populations.

The following metrics will be used to evaluate the effective reach of promotion efforts:

- Number of mentions in local and alternative news outlets
- Website hits and downloads of educational materials or reports
- Social media share of Our Parks, Our Future content
- Engagement on NextDoor and SpeakUp Austin
- A minimum of 1,000 survey responses from geographically diverse areas of the city
- Engagement and general awareness of PARD employees and partners

For all public meetings, events and surveys, the following metrics will be used to evaluate the equity of participation:

- Number of people who attend meetings or events throughout the life of project
- The range of zip codes of participants
- The age range of participants (when available)
- The race and ethnicity range of participants (when available)
- Statistically Valid Survey Results (representative of Austin's demographics) with a minimum of 800 completed surveys
- A minimum of 1,000 completed online survey responses
- A minimum of 500 new interest list sign-ups
- Level of participation from those with limited English proficiency
- Results of survey / feedback on process (e.g., public meeting comment card)

DESIRED COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES

Outcomes of a successful public engagement process include:

1. Participation that is representative of Austin's demographics (e.g., homeowners/renters; race and ethnicity; age; geographic location) and numbers into the thousands;
2. Involvement at key stages with the City of Austin Equity Office staff and application of the equity analysis tool (specifically Box 4: Community Engagement) leading up to and following each planning summit, to ensure communities of color have been actively and effectively engaged in the LRP process;
3. At the end of the planning process, more residents have learned about and participated in their parks through enjoyable and engaging experiences that help them to develop a deeper understanding about the parks system and the role parks play in peoples' lives";
4. The LRP is an easy-to-use and meaningful document, which provides clear guidance and priorities for PARD staff and the public, and includes a clear picture of the input received from the community and the plan's vision, strategies, and priorities; and
5. Development of a public engagement process, including messaging and educational materials, that helps define the planning process as a model for the City of Austin and other cities across the country.

3.

OUTREACH EFFORTS

A key part of the outreach effort is building a comprehensive stakeholder list. The contact database developed by Austin PARD, the Community Engagement Advisory Committee (CEAC), and consultant team-member Adisa Communications will be informed regularly of public meetings and project updates. This stakeholder list will be supplemented by and regularly updated to include survey participants, as well as those who sign up for updates online and as the public engagement process progresses.

DIGITAL MEDIA

Digital outreach efforts were designed to promote all opportunities for public involvement on the project and to comply with the city's Digital Inclusion strategy. Reporting by Council District to potentially identify ways in which we can expand the social media reach (e.g., through libraries, neighborhood organizations, community connectivity sites).

Austin Future Parks Website

The project website provides the public with a one-stop-shop for information on all project components, a schedule of the LRP activities and updates, as well as materials including draft documents, frequently asked questions, public notices, and links to related websites. The website includes presentations, surveys and other exercises from the various meetings for those individuals who are unable to attend in person. A direct email is also provided for residents to submit questions or comments and requests for additional information.

Eblasts

Eblasts are sent out via email to the entire contact database to inform community members of the open houses, surveys, and other events as scheduled. These are distributed through email communications to be both efficient and broad reaching. PARD distributed e-blasts as needed (e.g. in advance of all planning summits and pop-up events) to promote event attendance and increase awareness of the planning process.

Social Media

Social media provides an efficient and accessible method of reaching a large cross-section of residents. PARD regularly posts and maintains content and updates on social media sites, including Twitter, Facebook, and NextDoor. The project hashtag for use on Twitter and other tagging-enabled sites is: #AustinFutureParks. A social media project kit is shared with the CEAC and PARD partners to expand the reach beyond the PARD audience, and to personally engage with community members.

Speak-Up Austin

PARD created an Our Parks, Our Future Long Range Plan SpeakUp Austin! page that links to the project website and includes discussions and posts on topics related to the LRP. The SpeakUp page was used to create a virtual meeting space tied to the first round of community open house meetings. It also served as the landing page for the online survey and will be used in upcoming rounds of community input.

NEWS MEDIA & ADVERTISING

Local news stories are essential to informing and educating the public. The PARD media team provides ongoing media briefings and press releases with the project's background, process, goals and objectives, and information about how to get involved. Efforts to inform the media happen in advance of and during each of the planning summits and at project milestones. Minority media and alternative news sources, like El Mundo and the Villager, are included in the project's distribution of information and materials. To encourage participation in the Our Parks, Our Future online survey, PARD placed CapMetro bus ads, radio ads, and print ads, including a survey link through text number.

PRINT MEDIA: FLYERS, POSTERS & POSTCARDS

Flyers, posters, and postcards are used to inform community members of the planning process, meetings, surveys, and other events. Not every resident has access to or uses social media and email regularly. Flyers and posters help to bridge the digital divide. Flyers were distributed before every community meeting in locations near the meeting site. Posters and signs were placed at meeting locations, in nearby locations, and in PARD facilities. All meeting flyers are produced in English and Spanish, and other languages are included based on population area. Project postcards are available at events throughout the planning process. Signage advertising the online survey was placed at all facilities and parks.



THE FUTURE OF AUSTIN'S PARKS

The Austin Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) is embarking on a long-range planning effort to guide the development and growth of Austin's park system. PARD's Long Range Plan for Land, Facilities and Programs (LRP) is developed every 10 years and provides a blueprint to guide land acquisition, capital improvements and the development of programs and new amenities.

TAKE PART IN OUR FUTURE

For more information and to get involved, visit austintexas.gov/austinfutureparks.

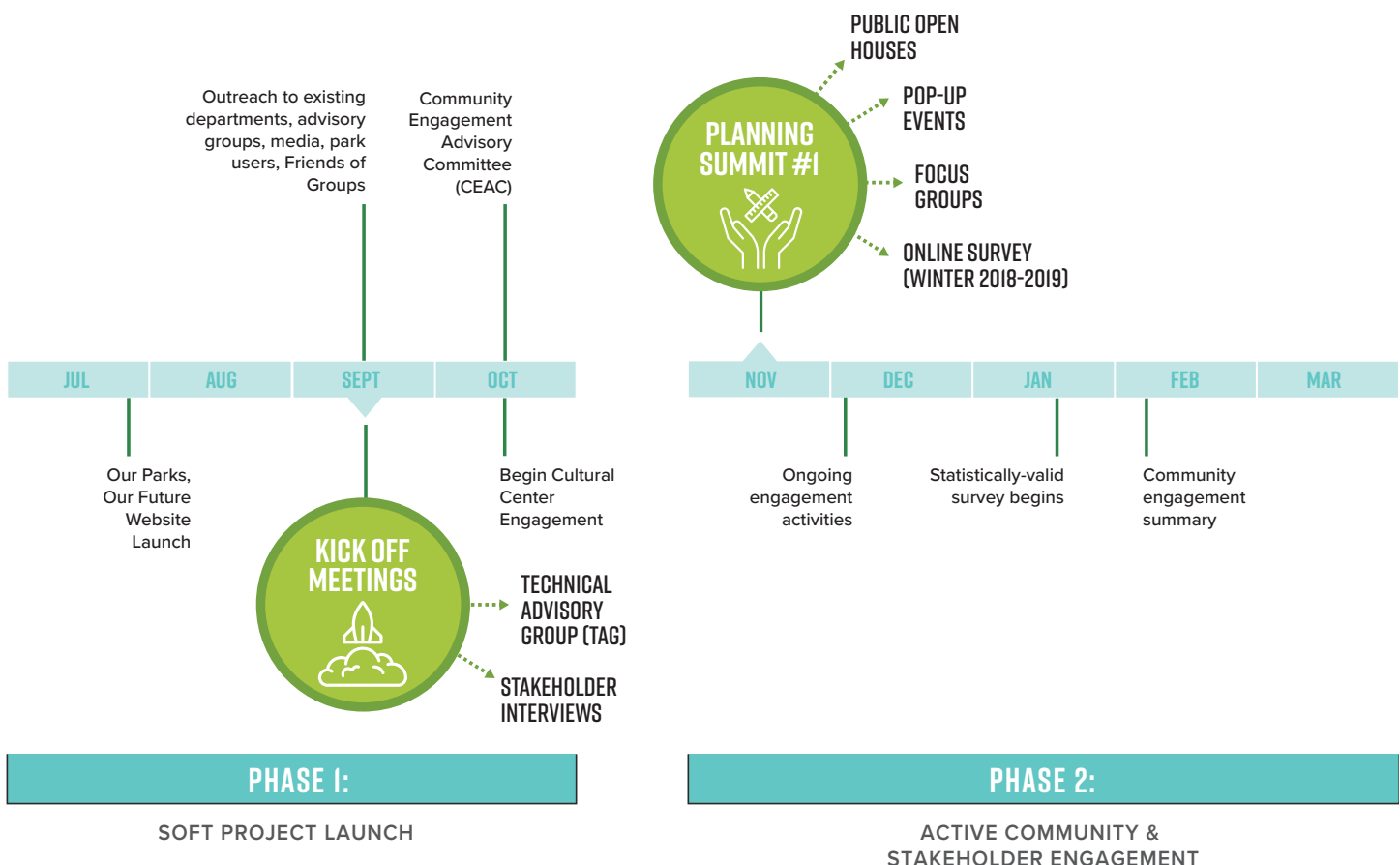


Promotional Banner, Sign, and Postcard.

4. PHASES & TYPES OF ENGAGEMENT

SURVEYS

To ensure broad participation beyond those that can attend in-person meetings, several types of surveys are included: online citywide survey; a randomly selected statistically valid survey; and an audio survey of cultural center users. Information and results from all surveys will be shared with the community at large and used to inform the reporting of the Austin community needs and priorities for use in the plan development.



MEETINGS

Planning Summits 1 and 2 each include five community meetings to ensure geographic and scheduling diversity and gather input and feedback. Planning Summit 3 will include one to two community meetings - draft plan conversations - to review the plan recommendations and actions. A minimum of 12 community meetings will be held throughout the process. The process also includes meetings with several key groups to help inform and guide the process throughout: Core Group (PARD), Technical Advisory Committee (TAG), and the Community Engagement Advisory Committee (CEAC), described in the following section.

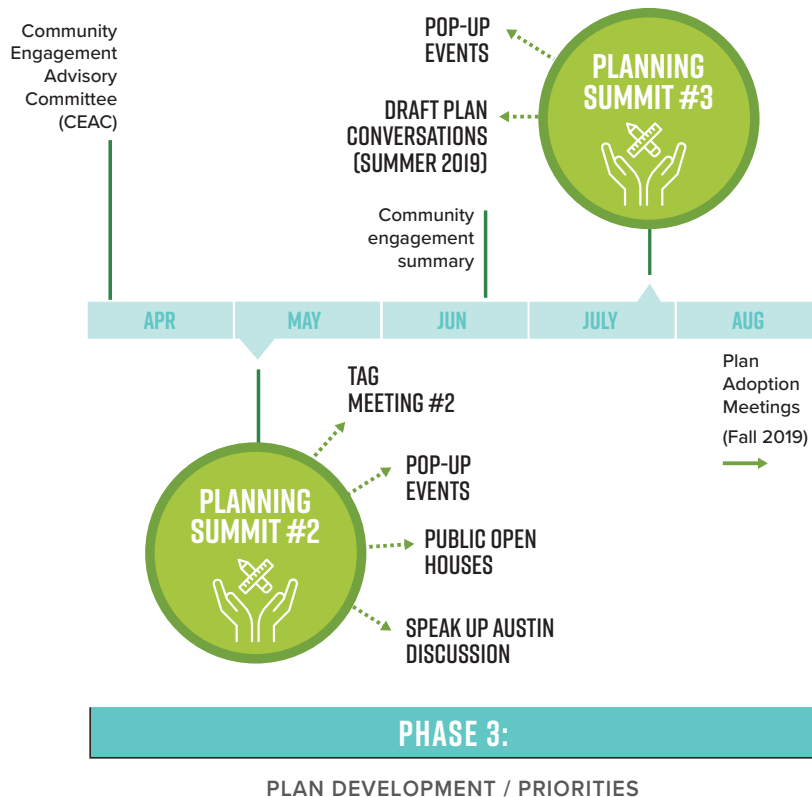
POP-UP EVENTS

These quick engagement stations take advantage of existing events or highly trafficked locations (e.g., parks, grocery stores) to supplement the community meeting series and broaden the geographic and scheduling reach of public engagement. Pop-Ups are modeled after the community meetings and are intended to engage a broader audience and meet people where they already are.

FOCUS GROUPS

As part of the outreach, the WRT team is conducting five focus groups to engage a demographically diverse group of people in guided discussions. The specific groups to be engaged will be based on input from PARD, the CEAC (at their first meeting in September), and other stakeholders as the process evolves.

In addition, the project team is conducting group interviews as part of each round of engagement. Groups include both city and non-city staff and have been organized around topic areas, e.g., maintenance and operations, community partnerships, recreation, programs, mobility and trails, and community health and wellness.



Engagement Phases Timeline.

ADVISORY BODIES

CORE TEAM

The LRP Core Team consists of PARD leadership and staff from across the department who are closely involved in the planning process and implementation of the LRP. The Core Team meets monthly to review materials and provide guidance and direction to the consultant team.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CEAC)

The role of the Community Engagement Advisory Committee (CEAC) is to help guide the outreach, serve as ambassadors of Our Parks, Our Future planning process, identify strategies to engage hard to reach groups, and assist PARD in sharing information about the process and plan with the community. The CEAC met for the first time in October 2018 and assisted PARD with identifying outreach strategies, adding to the stakeholder database, and supporting the overall social media engagement. The CEAC will meet prior to Planning Summit 2 to review and provide feedback on meeting content, logistics, and engagement strategies..



Community Garden. Source: PARD.

TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP (TAG)

The Technical Advisory Group (TAG) is a diverse group of representatives of various City departments including PARD divisions, Transportation, Public Works, Public Health, Watershed Protection, Real Estate Services, Planning and Zoning, Office of Sustainability, Office of Equity, among others. The TAG met for the first time as part of the project kickoff in September 2018 and will meet again as part of Planning Summit 2.



Technical advisory group (TAG) Kick-Off Discussions. Source: WRT.

5. SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES TO DATE

The LRP Public Engagement Plan includes a more detailed description of all plan goals, anticipated outcomes, engagement and outreach activities. The following summary provides an overview of the events that have occurred to date, and will be updated as we move through the process.

1. KICK-OFF EVENTS & GETTING ORGANIZED
2. COMMUNITY MEETING SERIES #1
3. POP-UP SERIES #1
4. ONLINE COMMUNITY SURVEY
5. FOCUS GROUPS & INTERVIEWS
6. CULTURAL FACILITY AUDIO SURVEY
7. STATISTICALLY VALID SURVEY
8. COMMUNITY MEETING SERIES #2
9. POP-UP SERIES # 2
10. COMMUNITY MEETING SERIES #3
11. POP-UP SERIES #3

KICK-OFF EVENTS & GETTING ORGANIZED

PHASE ONE

PURPOSE & OVERVIEW

PARD and the consultant team, led by WRT, held a two-day series of meetings, interviews, and tours to officially kickoff the planning process, 9/20/18 and 9/21/18. The kickoff events included a group tour of park and recreation facilities, the first meeting of the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) with representatives from departments across the city, a public engagement strategy session, and a series of WRT-led interviews with PARD divisions and park partners. Stakeholders included PARD operations and maintenance staff, AISD and other schoolyard parks and partnerships, and partners including Austin Parks Foundation, Downtown Austin Alliance, GAVA, Stronger Austin, and Travis County.

WHERE & WHEN

Park Tour and PARD Offices
September 20-20, 2018



Kick-Off Park Tour. Source: WRT.



Park Tour Highlights. Source: WRT.

COMMUNITY MEETING SERIES #1

PHASE ONE

189
PARTICIPANTS

PURPOSE & OVERVIEW

This series of five open houses focused on the question “what do our parks mean to you?” and consisted of stations manned by the consultant team and local stakeholders that described the existing parks and recreation resources in the city, explained the planning process and the LRP’s importance, and solicited feedback on:

- Current strengths, deficiencies, opportunities, and challenges
- Facility and program priorities
- Budget priorities and trade-offs (e.g., “money game”)
- Park and recreation future vision

WHERE & WHEN

George Washington Carver Museum

1165 Angelina Street
November 8, 2018, 6pm-8pm

Northwest Recreation Center

2913 Northland Drive
November 10, 2018, 11am-1pm

Gustavo “Gus” L. Garcia Recreation Center

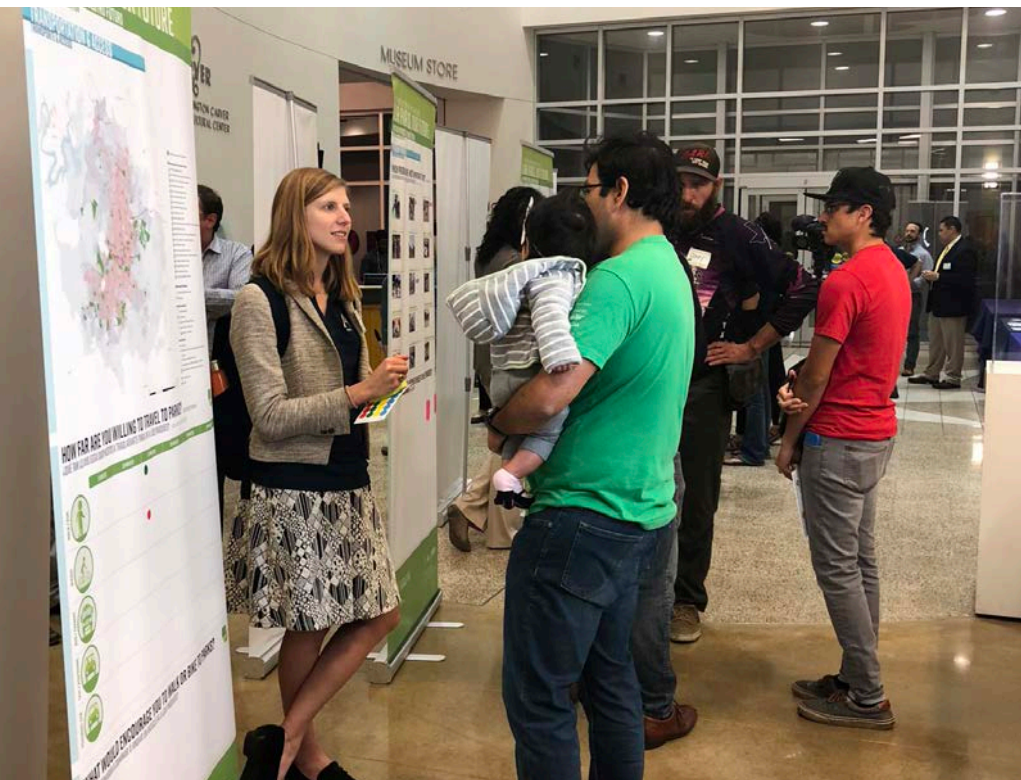
1201 E Rundberg Lane
November 10, 2018,, 3pm-5pm

Dittmar Recreation Center

1009 W Dittmar Road
November 13, 2018, 6pm-8pm

Fiesta Gardens Building

2101 Jesse E. Segovia Street
November 14, 2018, 6pm-8pm



Community Meeting at George Washington Carver Museum. Source: WRT.

WHAT WE HEARD

Summary of top responses (for all participants, not individual meeting locations):

Favorite Parks:

- Zilker Metropolitan Park
- Metz Neighborhood Park
- Roy Guereño Colorado River Park
- Barton Creek Greenbelt
- Circle C Metropolitan Park
- Gustavo “Gus” L. Garcia Recreation Center

What You Love About Austin Parks/

What Austin Parks Do Well:

- Trails, variety in trails
- Nature
- Maintenance of facilities, parks and vegetation - always clean.
- Sports programming (Basketball, volleyball, swimming, Disc Golf)
- Spread throughout the city
- Disc golf and multi-use courts
- Programs/Activities offered, Accessible events

Facility Types That Are Most Important to You:

- Nature Trails
- Pools & Water Features
- Natural Areas/Preserves
- Community Gardens
- Cultural/Historic Art Center

Programs Most Important to You:

- Outdoor Recreation
- Aquatics
- Stewardship Services (Adopt-a-Park/Trail)
- Arts & Culture
- Health & Fitness
- Senior Programs & Services

How Far You Are Willing to Travel to Parks (on average):

- Walk/Run: 15 minutes
- Biking: 20 minutes
- Personal Car: 30 minutes
- Transit: 30 minutes
- Taxi/Ride Share: 15 minutes

What Would Encourage You to Walk or Bike to Parks:

- More connected trails/bike lanes off streets
- Local or within 1 mile
- Improved neighborhood sidewalks and crosswalks
- Disc Golf (Closer access to disc golf courses, Put 9-hole disc golf courses at small parks)

How Austin Parks Can Improve:

OVERALL

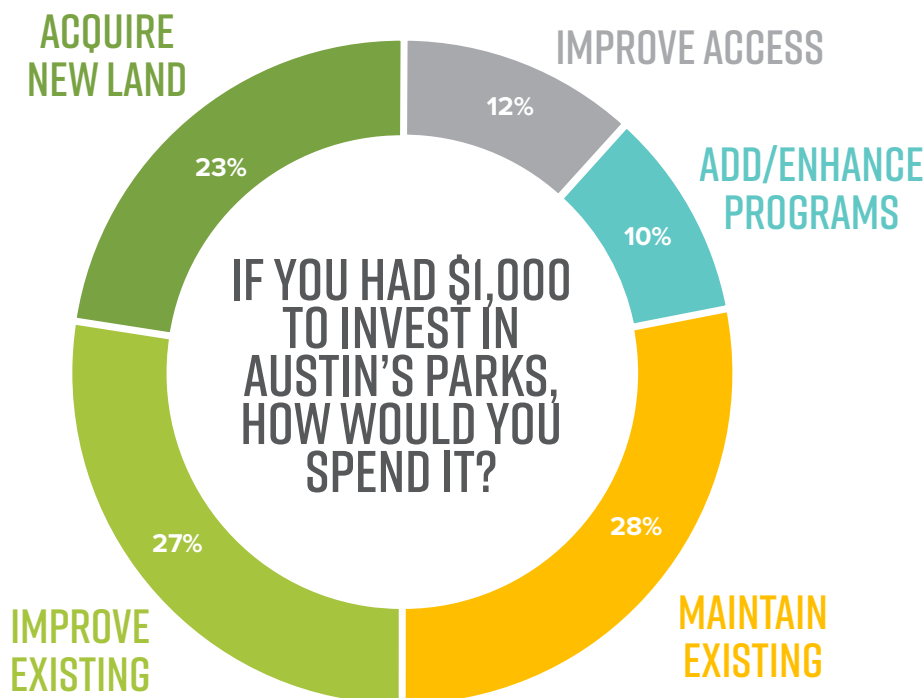
- Better, More Consistent Year-round Maintenance & Repair Programs for buildings, vegetation and infrastructure
- Disc Golf Improvements (More courses, Add safer crossings)
- Expanding Programming (More water stations/pads, dog parks, utilities for large events, educational classes)
- Promotion/Outreach/Education
- Trail/Path Improvements & Purpose/Mode Separations (ADA accessibility/paths, better access into parks)

FACILITIES

- Disc Golf (More and improved courses, disc golf tournament)
- Trail Improvements (add separate bike/hike trails, repair throughout city, better signage)
- Maintenance (on invasive species, repair infrastructure, bathrooms)
- More Neighborhood Parks

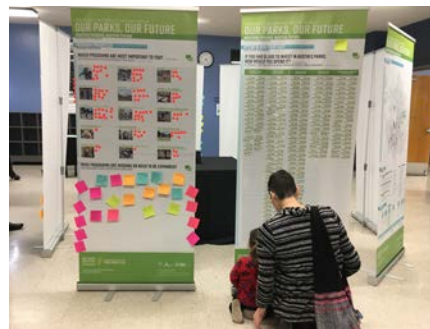
PROGRAMS

- Athletic/Sports Facilities (Multi-use/Bike polo courts, tennis courts)
- Programming for Special Populations (Youth Sports programs, fitness classes/section for women)
- Streamline the process for arranging events in Austin Parks



Community Meeting Series #1 Money Game Results.





POP-UP SERIES #1

140+
SURVEYS
COMPLETED

12
LOCAL EVENTS
ATTENDED

PHASE ONE

PURPOSE & OVERVIEW

PARD staff and consultant team member Adisa Communications, led pop-ups as a part of existing events or highly trafficked locations (e.g., libraries, farmers markets). These pop-ups took place in December of 2018 and January of 2019 and were designed to not only share information about the PARD Long Range Plan, but also to promote and extend the impact of the Community Series #1 by engaging residents and stakeholders outside of the meeting setting and encouraging more continuous, ongoing participation in the planning effort between meetings.

At the pop-ups, community members were greeted and provided with a fact sheet and one-page handout as well as PARD giveaways and additional Long Range Plan materials. Paper surveys and a tablet/computer were available to collect input for those interested. The money game board used as part of the first meeting series also proved an effective and concise way to gather input. Participants either completed the survey on site or were asked to complete the survey at a more convenient time.



LBJ Wildflower Center Pop-Up with Money Game. Source: WRT.

WHERE & WHEN

Walter E. Long Master Plan Meeting #4

Decker Middle School
8104 Decker Lane
December 4, 2018, 6pm – 8pm
Est. Attendance: 70

Jingle Booze (The Thinkery)*

1830 Simond Avenue
December 6, 2018, 7pm – 10pm
Est. Attendance: 600

Asian American Resource Center Master Plan Meeting #1

8401 Cameron Road
December 11, 2018, 6pm – 8pm
Est. Attendance: 50

* Indicates Adisa Communications attended; all others staffed by PARD

Movies in the Park

Zilker Park

December 13, 2018, 6pm – 8pm

Est. Attendance: 200

SFC Farmers Market at Sunset Valley*

3200 Jones Road

December 15, 2018, 9am – 1pm

Est. Attendance: 100

MT Supermarket

10901 N Lamar Boulevard G

January 5, 2019, 10am – 2pm

Est. Attendance: 100

YMCA Mobile Market

YMCA of East Austin Branch

5315 Ed Bluestein Boulevard

January 10, 2019, 4pm – 7pm

Est. Attendance: 100

TownLake YMCA

1100 W Cesar Chavez Street

January 19, 2019, 10am – 1pm

Est. Attendance: 150

Howson Branch Library*

2500 Exposition Boulevard

January 12, 2019, 11am – 1pm

Est. Attendance: 10

Spicewood Springs Branch Library*

8637 Spicewood Springs Road

January 12, 2019, 2pm – 4:45pm

Est. Attendance: 12

MLK Community Festival

MLK Statue at The University of
Texas at Austin

Speedway & Inner Campus Drive

January 21, 2019, 9am – 2pm

Est. Attendance: 300

Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower* Center

4801 La Crosse Avenue

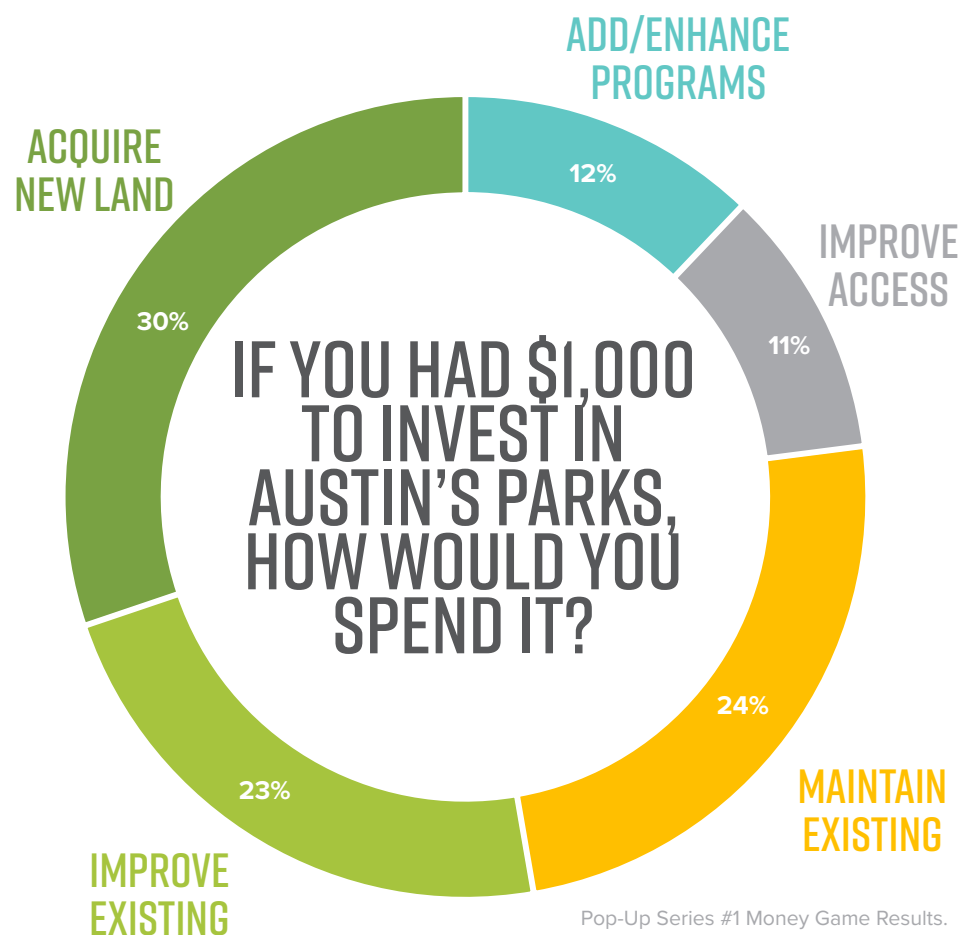
DATE, Time

Est. Attendance: 68



Residents completing PARD Community Surveys at MLK Community Festival Pop-Up. Source: PARD.

WHAT WE HEARD



ONLINE COMMUNITY SURVEY

PHASE ONE

4,400+
PARTICIPANTS

9,000+
COMMENTS
RECEIVED

This plan used two different types of surveys to achieve different but related goals. The first, the Online Community Survey, was designed as an explorative tool for more open-ended feedback that could shape the themes and focus of the plan, while the second, the Statistically Valid Survey, was designed as a more precise tool to prioritize investment and ensure results were representative of resident needs and desires at multiple geographic scales.

The online LRP survey opened following the first round of community meetings and provided an additional forum for participation. PARD advertised the survey through pop-up events, flyers, email blasts and social media, signage, and ads on Capital Metro buses and media/radio. The survey was designed to help the consultant team understand the current interests and needs of the community related to parks and recreational facilities, and included questions related to frequency of park use, how a person gets to or would like to get to their parks, and the types of programs and amenities they would like to see in future parks. The survey allowed for open ended comments, was provided in multiple languages, and received almost 9,000 comments.

HOW WE GOT THE WORD OUT



WEB

Social media,
e-blasts, Texts



PRINT

Flyers, lawn
signs



MEDIA

Cap metro &
media/ radio
ads

WHO TOOK THE SURVEY



FAMILY SIZE

42% live in a
2-person household



AGE

46% are 35-54
years old

TENURE

29% have lived in
Austin for 30+ years

28% have lived in
Austin for less than
10 years



49%
VISIT PARKS
WEEKLY

21%
VISIT PARKS
MONTHLY

16%
VISIT PARKS
DAILY

WHAT DO YOU VALUE?

- #1 (NATURAL) BEAUTY
- #2 PLACES TO CONNECT TO NATURE
- #3 CLEANLINESS
- #4 Easy to get to
- #5 Safety
- #6 Places to exercise or be active
- #7 Quiet places and places to relax

WHAT KEEPS YOU FROM USING PARKS?

- #1 CRIME OR SAFETY CONCERNS
- #2 NO PARKS OR FACILITIES CLOSE TO HOME
- #3 PARKS APPEAR DEGRADED, IN POOR CONDITION
- #4 Inadequate parking
- #5 Presence of people experiencing homelessness
- #6 Lack of lighting
- #7 Parks & facilities do not appear clean
- #8 Lack of awareness of what programs are offered
- #9 Operating hours / length of season too short

WHAT PROGRAMS WOULD KEEP YOU AT A PARK MORE?

38% ARTS & CULTURE

12% FITNESS & SPORTS

24% GROUP GATHERINGS

12% NATURE PROGRAMS

WHAT PARKS DO YOU VISIT OUTSIDE OF AUSTIN?

28% VISIT TRAVIS COUNTY PARKS

17% VISIT LCRA PARKS

DESIRES FOR THE NEXT 10 YEARS...

AMENITIES

1. Nature trails for hiking and walking
2. Natural areas & preserves
3. Multi-purpose trails (walking, running, hiking, mountain biking)

FACILITIES

1. Nature centers
2. Multi-generational community recreation centers
3. Community centers for recreation, art & culture

PROGRAMS

1. Aquatic
2. Gardening
3. Group Exercise

YOUTH PROGRAMS

1. Summer camps (nature-based)
2. Youth environmental education
3. Summer camps (adventure)

MOST FREQUENTLY VISITED PARKS

NEIGHBORHOOD/SCHOOL/POCKET PARK 1,906 Respondents

A.B. DITTMAR PARK



6%

BRENTWOOD PARK



5%

BARTON HILLS PARK



5%

DISTRICT/METROPOLITAN PARK 2,098 Respondents

ZILKER PARK



21%

WALNUT CREEK PARK



10%



10%

GREENBELT / GREENWAY 1,762 Respondents

BARTON CREEK



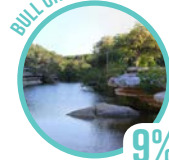
45%

SHOAL CREEK



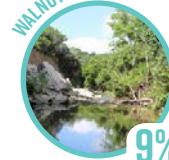
10%

BULL CREEK



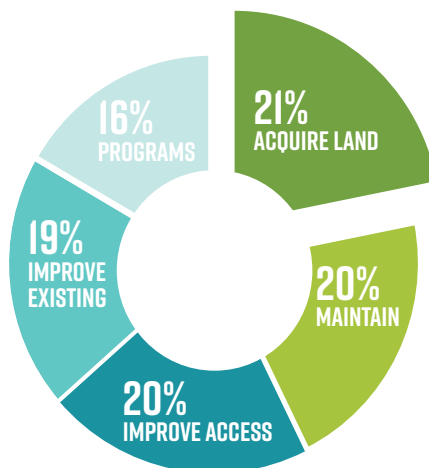
9%

WALNUT CREEK



9%

INVESTMENT PRIORITIES



FOCUS GROUPS & INTERVIEWS

PHASE ONE

PURPOSE & OVERVIEW

As part of the insight gathering process, the GO collaborative team conducted a series of five focus groups and interviews in March through June 2019 to gather a deeper understanding about some key issues that the Parks and Recreation Department knows will be of community-wide interest in the future. The subjects for these engagements include: Parks Usage for Seniors, Dog Parks, Untapped Minority Youth Engagement, and Accessibility. Focus groups were held for each topic at different park facility locations. For the senior audiences additional interviews are being held with seniors who do not currently access the city's senior centers and other park amenities in order to more fully understand how the city can better serve that particular audience of users.

Specific individuals were initially recommended by PARD staff members and were contacted on an individual basis by email. When appropriate, supporting organizations or advocacy groups also helped with specific recommendations, and with delivering announcements about any upcoming focus groups through their social media channels.

Once individuals were confirmed, the groups (ranging from six-seven per group) gathered for a ninety-minute conversation where participants introduced themselves and worked through a series of questions that looked to identify the central opportunities and barriers around the central topic.

WHERE & WHEN

Dog Park Advocates
Austin Recreation Center
March 6, 2019 / Attendees: 7

Active Seniors
Lamar Senior Center
March 7, 2019 / Attendees: 6

Accessibility Advocates
Austin Recreation Center
March 7, 2019 / Attendees: 7

Untapped Youth Advocacy Organizations
Montopolis Recreation Center
March 26, 2019

Senior (Non-Park Users)
Multiple Dates

School for the Blind & School for the Deaf
May 23, 2019 / Attendees: 8
June 7, 2019 / Attendees: 4

WHAT WE HEARD

Summary of top themes from the focus group discussions include:

Dog Park Advocates:

- Appreciation of growth in understanding around dog parks in last decade
- Need to continue to upgrade and maintain facilities over time (e.g., safety of dogs and owners through: double entry gates, water features, cooling zones)
- Group interest in a dog sports center (amenity that could require user fees)
- Support for and focus on important role of signage / communication around dog safety (e.g., body language, when is it safe to approach a dog)
- Consider offering classes at the dog parks themselves (or other locations) to help with the many needed dimensions of community education – from “How to be a Good Dog Owner”, to “How to be with Dogs in Public” - similar to how community education offerings are at libraries and recreation centers.

Active Seniors:

- Appreciation and recognition of the wealth of assets-- trails, parks, and programming
- Need to keep increasing accessibility to parks by public transit and keep parks accessible with wheelchair accessible trails
- Potential to add multi-generational spaces to increase interaction between different age groups and foster

connections

- Consider adding more enhanced facilities, such as more shaded rest spots, more restrooms, and segregated speeds on active trails

Non-active seniors

- Similar needs to that of active seniors, but to a greater extent
- While enhanced facilities may not be a necessity for active seniors, those same enhanced facilities (shaded rest spots, restrooms, etc.) determines whether parks accessible for non-active seniors

Accessibility Advocates:

- PARD should consider accessibility by first asking questions such as “What is the experience when people of disabilities get to parks,” “How will they need to plan ahead,” and “is wayfinding possible for people of all abilities”
- Group recognition that the “door-to-door” experience and universal design (design that considers use and experience of users of all abilities) is a critical aspect to make parks welcoming for all, anywhere from trail navigation to bathroom access to inclusive wayfinding
- Interest in using tech to solve some accessibility issues (e.g. audio systems for the blind)
- General enthusiasm for more sensory playscapes and pocket parks, which can increase spatial equity

Untapped Youth Advocacy

Organizations:

- Need to improve facilities to address core concern of accessibility in every dimension,

whether mobility infrastructure or cultural accessibility; this may include “in between” spaces, safe spaces, nursing rooms, and physically accessible spaces

- Focus on specific routes taken by youth to address park accessibility/connectivity and explore combining with safe-routes-to-school efforts
- Desire for better communication and administrative processes to increase sense of accessibility, such as bi-lingual signage, hiring staff from adjacent neighborhoods, more communication about what is available in all parks, improved process for groups trying to reserve PARD spaces

School for the Blind and School for the Deaf:

- Essential to recognize universal design as a critical element for an equitable and inclusive parks system
- Primary need for both groups is to hire an accessibility-design specialist to create a series of design guidelines
- Specific recommendations for the blind & deaf communities include more accessible wayfinding, amenities, and general urban design (e.g. tactile map, auditory locators like windchimes, visual aids, captioning at park events, sensory playscapes, and designated spots for MetroAccess)

CULTURAL FACILITY AUDIO SURVEY

PHASE ONE

88
PARTICIPANTS

PURPOSE & OVERVIEW

Consultant team-member, GO collaborative conducted an arts-based engagement activity intended to bring a deeper understanding of the role PARD Cultural facilities play in the lives of their users. The team interviewed Austin residents at eight city cultural facility sites, and results from the conversations will inform the development of the LRP. A local Austin-based sound is creating an “audio compendium” as a sampling of comments to be available to the larger project for education and promotional purposes.

The survey results and audio clips are being processed and this section will be updated as they are completed.

WHERE

Asian American Resource Center

October 6, 2018 / Interviews: 15

Elisabet Ney Museum

October 28, 2018 / Interviews: 14

George Washington Carver Museum and Cultural Center

November 3, 2018 / Interviews: 6

Dougherty Arts Center

November 14, 2018 / Interviews: 7
March 4, 2019 / Interviews: 11

Old Bakery and Emporium

March 6, 2019 / Interviews: 6

Brush Square Museums

March 31, 2019 / Interviews: 5

Emma S. Barrientos - Mexican American Cultural Center

March 31, 2019 / Interviews: 14

Zilker Hillside Theater

May 19, 2019 / Interviews: 10



George Washington Carver Museum and Cultural Center, Source: PARD.

WHAT WE HEARD

Summary of top themes from the cultural facility survey include:

Asian American Resource Center (AARC)

- Participants see the AARC as an important place to remember and celebrate heritage and to cultivate community among Asians and non-Asians
- Recognition that elders play an important role and need to provide these spaces for them to socialize, learn, and stay active
- Consider expanding the language program (ESL classes) and offering other language classes

Elisabet Ney Museum

- Overall appreciation for the affordable and diverse (and sometimes niche) programming
- Amenities of Shipe Park and the museum's open space allows it to become a neighborhood gathering space
- Interviewees highlight the museum's importance as a beacon to Texas women, art, and history and the need to keep celebrating that
- While interviewees generally felt the museum did not need to change, small improvements could include distinguishing museum space versus park space, holding events/discussion around the confederate sculptures, and explore potential renovation

George Washington Carver Museum and Cultural Center

- Like the AARC, the Carver is an important anchor and community gathering space for the active African American community and their events/programs
- Could add a community garden for health/education purposes as well as more advertising for the rich programming and events to draw more attendance

Dougherty Arts Center

- Participants value the arts center, which provides community members with a variety of spaces to engage creatively with their own work as well as with each other
- Participants also praise the affordability and accessibility at the Dougherty
- Potential improvements include facility renovations, longer hours, and even exploring offshoots of the Dougherty throughout the city

Old Bakery and Emporium

- The Old Bakery and its senior program serve as a community for creative seniors, while allowing them to engage with visitors
- No significant improvements were suggested, except for more resources

Brush Square Museums

- Need to preserve and expand knowledge of Texas's history through the Brush Square Museums (similar to the Elisabet Ney Museum)
- Appreciation for the presence of these museums in the heart of downtown
- Potential for more youth engagement and education

Emma S. Barrientos- Mexican American Cultural Center (MACC)

- MACC viewed by participants as one of the only spaces that recognizes, celebrates, and represents Mexican American, Latino, Spanish-speaking cultures. It is also seen as a welcoming place for families
- Participants recognize that many of the community members MACC is trying to serve are being pushed out and there is a need to continue building out the original master plan and keep supporting the Mexican American community
- Could increase more parking and public transit accessibility, as well as more programming (e.g. outdoor sculpture garden, weekday evening programming, more advertising, academic lectures)

Zilker Hillside Theater

- Zilker Hillside Theater is a community anchor where people come regularly, especially during the summer to enjoy culture in a park
- Need to preserve it as it is to ensure future success

STATISTICALLY VALID SURVEY

PHASE ONE & TWO

925
PARTICIPANTS

PURPOSE & OVERVIEW

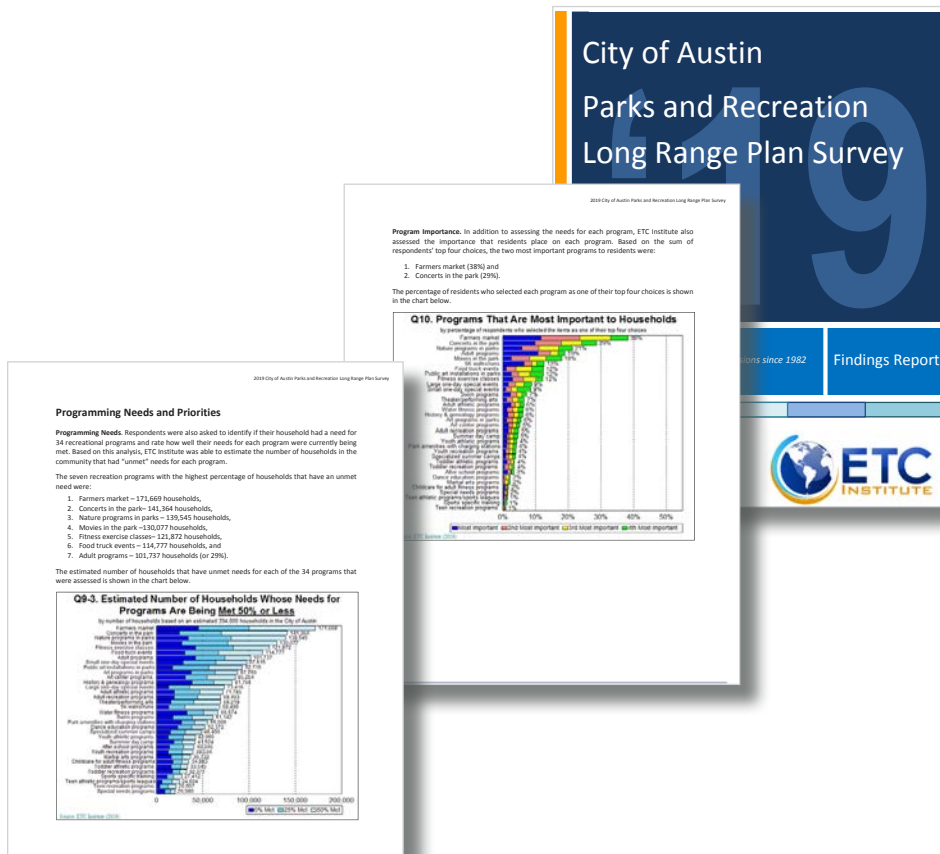
This survey was administered by ETC Institute via telephone, mail, and internet and was translated as needed in order to capture with a degree of certainty the needs and priorities of all residents in the city—not just those who choose to participate in other forms of engagement. This survey was designed to validate and complement other engagement through the use of more in-depth questions. The statistically valid survey continued until it had achieved a 95% confidence interval for all results at the citywide and combined planning area level. A total of 925 residents completed the survey. The overall results for the sample of 925 households have a precision of at least +/- 3.22 at the 95% level of confidence.

WHEN

January 2019 - March 2019

METHOD

ETC Institute mailed a survey packet to a random sample of households in the City of Austin. Each survey packet contained a cover letter, a copy of the survey, and a postage-paid return envelope. Residents who received the survey were given the option of returning the survey by mail or completing it online at www.AustinPARDSurvey.org. Ten days after the surveys were mailed, ETC Institute sent emails and placed phone calls to the households that received the survey to encourage participation. The emails contained a link to the online version of the survey to make it easy for residents to complete the survey. To prevent people who were not residents of the City of Austin from participating, everyone who completed the survey online was required to enter their home address prior to submitting the survey. If the address from a survey completed online did not match one of the addresses selected for the sample, the online survey was not counted.



RESULTS

Facility/Amenity Use, Ratings and Priorities

- 90% of households visited a PARD park or facility during the past year.
- 83% of households who visited a park or facility indicated that the condition of the parks/facilities they visited was either “excellent” or “good”

The four recreation amenities with the highest percentage of households that have an unmet need were:

1. Open spaces/nature parks preserve
2. Multi-purpose and nature trails
3. Community garden
4. Off-leash dog areas/parks

The two most important amenities to residents were multi-purpose and nature trails (57%) and open spaces/nature parks/preserves (42%).

Program Use, Ratings and Priorities

- 17% of households participated in a program offered by PARD during the past year.
- 90% of respondents who participated rated the programs their household participated in as either “excellent” or “good”

The seven recreation programs with the highest percentage of households that have an unmet need were:

1. Farmers market
2. Concerts in the park
3. Nature programs in parks
4. Movies in the park
5. Fitness exercise classes
6. Food truck events
7. Adult programs

The two most important programs to residents were farmers markets (38%) and concerts in the park (29%).

Information Sources

Seventy-three percent (73%) of respondents indicated that word of mouth is the way they learn about City of Austin programs, activities, and events. Only 29% of respondents indicated they used the City of Austin website and another 29% indicated they use newspapers. However, respondents indicated that Email (28%) or the PARD website (18%) are the most preferred information sources for programs, activities, and events.

Barriers to Usage and Participation

The biggest barriers to usage and participation were:

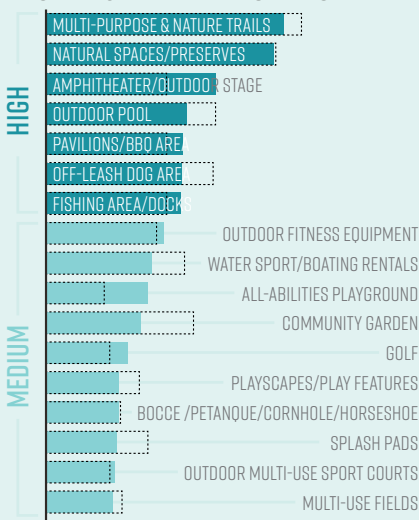
1. a lack of awareness of what programs are offered (69%)
2. inadequate parking at parks and facilities (61%)
3. the presence of people experiencing homelessness (54%)

EXAMPLE: PRIORITY NEEDS FOR SOUTHEAST

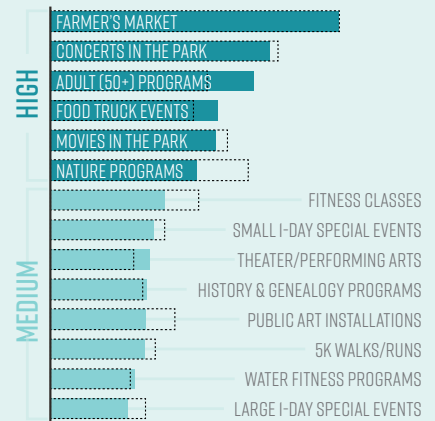
The Priority Investment Rating (PIR) System was developed by ETC Institute as an objective tool to evaluate the priority that should be placed on investments. The PIR equally weights the importance residents place on something and how many residents have unmet needs for that thing.

Using the PIR system for the statistically valid survey of residents of the Southeast Combined Planning Area, the following priorities emerged in this ranked order (compared against the citywide prioritization of the same elements, depicted in the black dashed outline).

FACILITY & AMENITY PRIORITIES



PROGRAM PRIORITIES



COMMUNITY MEETING SERIES #2

PHASE TWO

136+
PARTICIPANTS

PURPOSE & OVERVIEW

This series of five open houses in five council districts included results of the first round of community engagement, in addition to groupings of stations or themes discussing: current stats about the park system and benchmarking comparisons; growth and development trends; facility and amenities within the city's park system; and a look at how trends and conditions are dispersed geographically.

The associated pop-ups took place in May and June of 2019 and were designed to expand the reach of the community meetings. Additionally, a virtual version of the meeting took place after the conclusion of the in-person meeting series. The virtual meeting allowed people to view the meeting boards and presentation, and provide comments through Speak up Austin through June 10.

WHERE & WHEN

South Austin Senior Activity Center

3911 Manchaca Road
May 2, 2019, 6pm - 8pm

Anderson Mill Limited District Community Center

11500 El Salido Parkway
May 3, 2019, 6:30pm - 8:30pm

Circle C Community Center

7817 La Crosse Avenue
May 4, 2019, 10am - 12pm

IBPS Buddhist Temple/FGS Xiang Yun Temple

6720 N Capital of Texas Highway
May 4, 2019, 2pm - 4pm

Austin Recreation Center

1301 Shoal Creek Boulevard
May 4, 2019, 6pm - 8pm

NOTE : flash floods at night on Friday, May 3rd had a negative impact on attendance for this community meeting series.



Community Meeting Series #2 at Anderson Mill, Source: WRT

WHAT WE HEARD

THEMES FEEDBACK

Participants were able to provide feedback and vote on the ten major themes that emerged from previous community engagement events and completed surveys. Those ten themes are: natural experiences, unstructured spaces, green infrastructure, linear parks & trails, proximity & access, urban spaces, parks & arts/culture, educational opportunities, inclusivity, and cleanliness & safety. In general, there was consensus across all sub-areas on what people wanted to see in the future. The top five long-range themes that participants agreed on are:

1. Cleanliness & Safety

People are concerned that parks are not being adequately taken care of. This includes issues around lighting, shade, maintenance, recycling, bathrooms, off-leash dog areas and dog waste disposal. Related to this, people also expressed concern about the issue of homelessness on many dimensions – safety, park cleanliness, humanitarian - and saw an opportunity to work with homeless population to improve park cleanliness & safety.

2. Linear Parks & Trails

People are more interested in parks that allow them to move (walk/run/bike) as opposed to staying in one place. There is an interest in nature and multipurpose trails within PARD parks as well as connectivity between parks along urban trails.

3. Inclusivity

People express a desire for parks and programming to be more inclusive. This includes more publicity about activities, providing free parking, reducing fees that prevent low-income residents from participating, and increasing multi-generational programs and spaces.

4. Natural Experiences

People express a desire for parks that feel more natural. This includes undeveloped, wild natural spaces, rustic finishes instead of paved areas and more native plants.

5. Unstructured Spaces

In general, people care less about spaces for specific programming, opting for more multi-use spaces. This includes preserving green, “natural” and “open” spaces.



Community Meeting Series #2 at Fo Guang Shan Xiang Yun Temple, Source: WRT

WHAT WE HEARD (CONTINUED...)

WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?

Participants were asked what was most important to them, and responses varied from more recycling to increased parking to additional resources for disc golf. There was a general interest in increasing summer camp opportunities and striking a balance between active recreation/programming and preserving parks as natural areas. However, participants raised concerns on equity and affordable housing as parkland and amenities increase. Some comments include:

- “More budgeting towards cleaning up trash on greenbelts”
- “Park programming for kids + adults with disabilities”
- “A functional multi-purpose court (fenced in, nice surface) for multiple sports to practice, hold tournaments, and engage in weekly pick-up games”
- “Natural play and learning environments are important for early childhood development. Seeing money go towards installation of natural play sites is good for all of us”



PARD Partner Tables at Community Meeting Series #2 at South Austin Senior Center, Source: WRT

IDENTIFYING LOCAL NEEDS

Participants were also shown the six geographic sub-areas that divide Austin for the purposes of the LRP: North, East, Southeast, Southwest, West, and Central. These sub-areas are intended to approximate the way residents and visitors might make use of the local park system--what facilities and amenities are accessible to them and how they relate to one another.

There were opportunities to give feedback on four different topics within each sub-area:

1. Improving Connections/Access

This asked where access and connections to existing parks could be improved.

2. Investing in Existing Parks

Participants were asked where investments in improvements/maintenance to existing parks should be made.

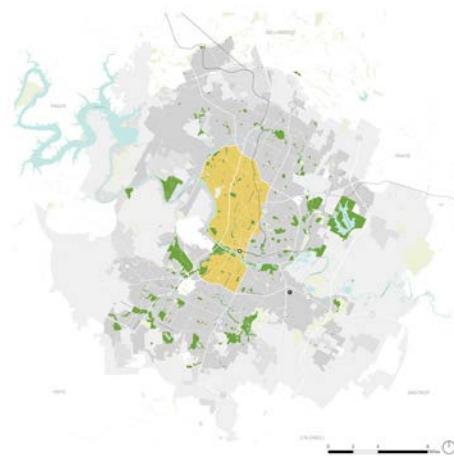
3. Creating New Parks

Where participants would like to see new parks located.

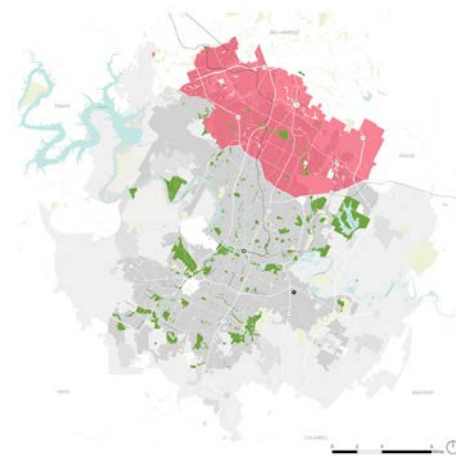
4. Facility Type High Priority Needs

This question was specific to each sub-area and reflective of previous feedback. Priority needs were identified, such as trails, natural spaces, and outdoor pools, and participants were then asked where these facilities should be located in their area.

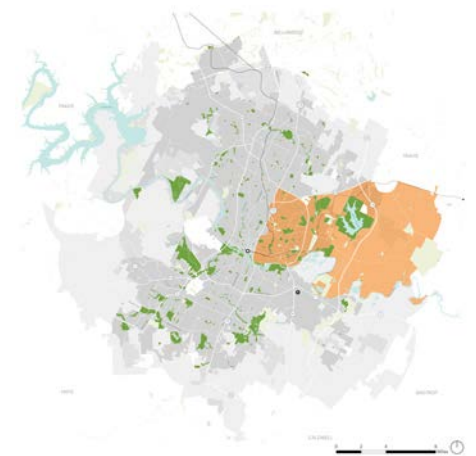
CENTRAL



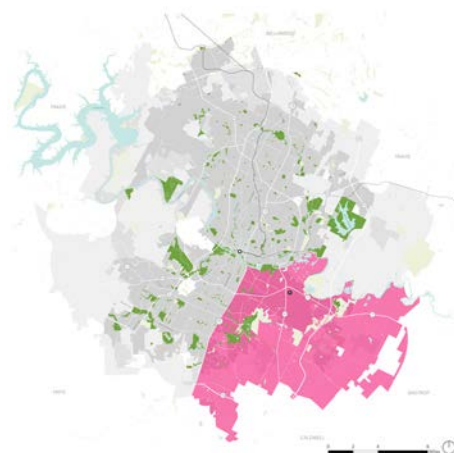
NORTH



EAST



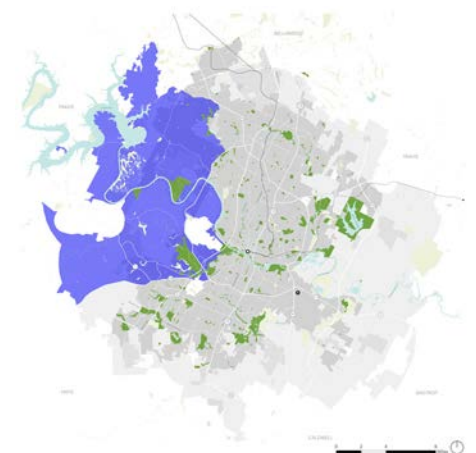
SOUTHEAST



SOUTHWEST



WEST



POP-UP SERIES #2

52
COMMENTS
SUBMITTED

157
POP-UP VISITORS
ENGAGED

PHASE TWO

PURPOSE & OVERVIEW

PARD staff and consultant team member Adisa Communications, led pop-ups as a part of existing events or highly trafficked locations (e.g., libraries, farmers markets). These pop-ups took place in May and June of 2019 and were designed to not only share information about the PARD Long Range Plan, but also to promote and extend the impact of the Community Meeting Series #2 by engaging residents and stakeholders outside of the meeting setting and encouraging more continuous, ongoing participation in the planning effort between meetings.

At the pop-ups, community members were greeted and provided with a fact sheet and one-page handout as well as PARD giveaways and additional Long Range Plan materials. Several Community Meeting #2 boards were available for information and input gathering: a summary of the community survey results, the community engagement theme dot-voting board, and the combined planning area input board for the area in which the pop-up was taking place.



ACC Highland Pop-Up

WHERE & WHEN

ACC Highland*

6101 ACC Highland Campus Drive
May 9, 2019, 11am – 12pm
Visitors Engaged: 22

Southeast Branch Library*

5803 Nuckols Crossing Road
May 11, 2019, 2pm - 4pm
Visitors Engaged: 7

Ruiz Branch Library*

1600 Grove Boulevard
May 16, 2019, 5pm - 7pm
Visitors Engaged: 7

YMCA East Communities*

5315 Ed Bluestein Boulevard
May 18, 2019, 12pm - 3pm
Visitors Engaged: 12

Cap Metro Health & Wellness Fair

2910 E 5th Street
June 5, 2019, 11am - 2pm
Visitors Engaged: 30

St. Elmo Brewing Company*

440 E St Elmo Road G-2
June 6, 2019, 7pm - 10pm
Visitors Engaged: 13

North Village Branch Library*

2505 Steck Avenue
June 7, 2019, 4pm - 6pm
Visitors Engaged: 6

* Indicates Adisa Communications attended; all others staffed by PARD



St. Elmo Brewing Company Pop-Up

John Trevino Master Plan

John Trevino Jr. Metro Park

June 8, 2019, 10am - 12pm

Visitors Engaged: 60

District 7 Town Hall

Northwest Rec Center

June 11, 2019, 6:30pm - 8pm

Visitors Engaged: to be added



Ruiz Branch Library Pop-Up



YMCA East Communities Pop-Up



St. Elmo Brewing Company Pop-Up

COMMUNITY MEETING SERIES #3

PHASE THREE

PURPOSE & OVERVIEW

This final set of two community meetings had a hybrid format: a brief introductory presentation providing an overview of the planning process and recommendations to get participants oriented, and then an informal open house where participants were encouraged to review boards describing citywide and planning area recommendations, ask questions and provide feedback on the recommendations.

These meetings were designed to:

- Share results of the needs assessments and community input to date
- Inform the public and project stakeholders of the Draft Plan recommendations in a setting that encouraged informal discussion and clarifying questions
- Get feedback on priorities for different areas of the city
- Kick off the public review process for the Draft Plan
- Share information on how to get involved and next steps

After the meetings were complete, the draft plan was made available online for public review through September 9, 2019. Pop-ups at locations across the city were also held to get direct feedback from the community during the comment period.

WHERE & WHEN

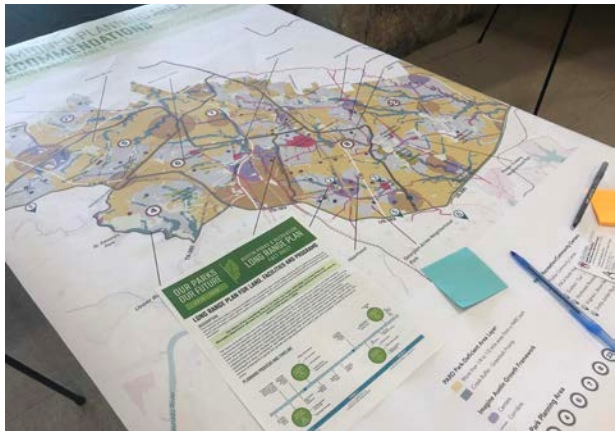
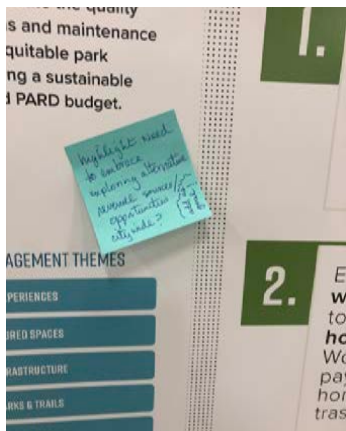
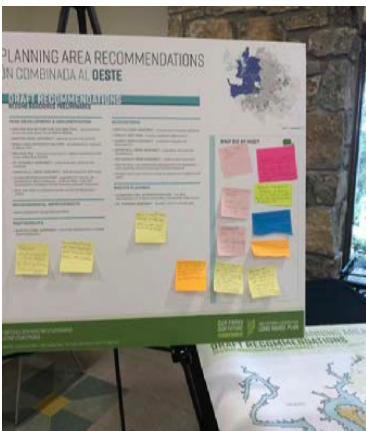
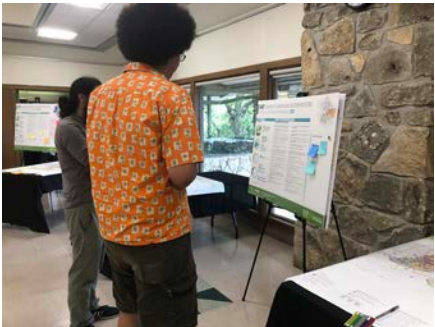
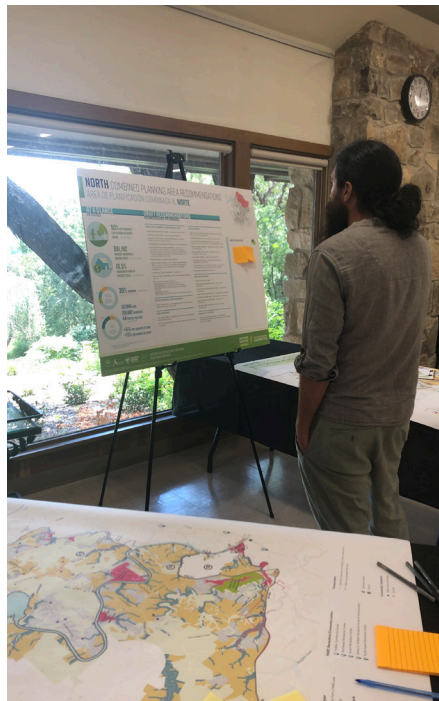
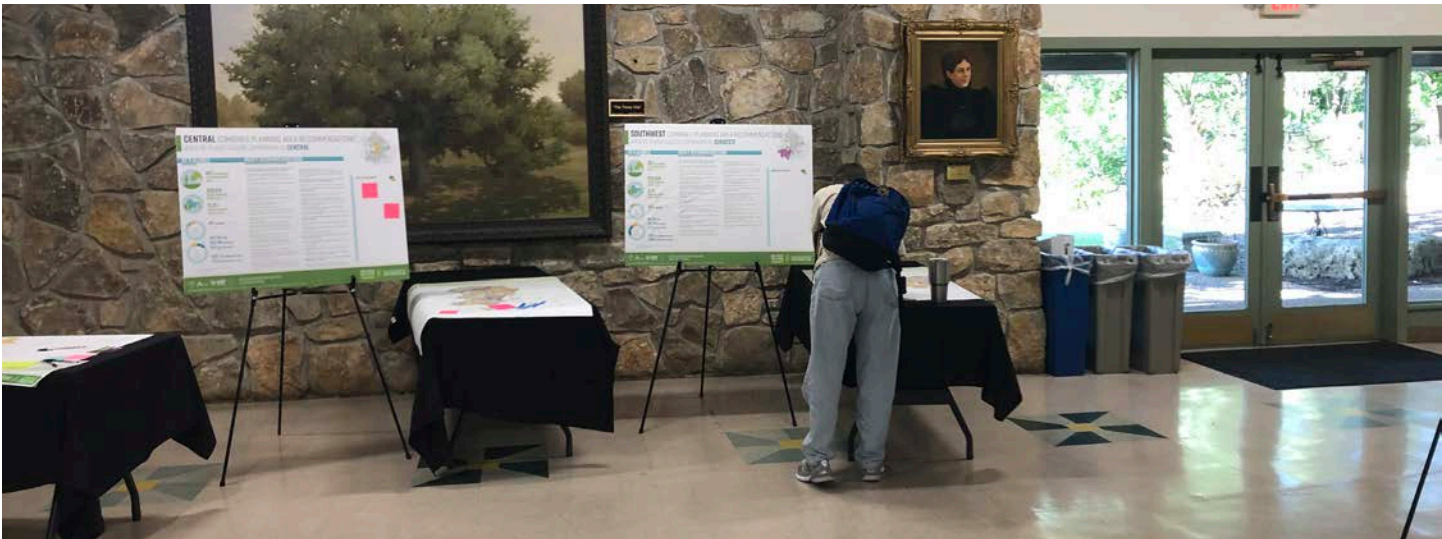
Millennium Youth Entertainment Complex

1156 Hargrave St
July 25, 2019, 4pm - 8pm

Zilker Botanical Garden

2220 Barton Springs Rd
July 27, 2019, 9am - 1pm





POP-UP SERIES #3

11
EVENTS
ATTENDED

248
POP-UP VISITORS
ENGAGED

PHASE THREE

PURPOSE & OVERVIEW

PARD staff and consultant team member Adisa Communications led draft plan review pop-ups as a part of existing events or highly trafficked locations (e.g., libraries, farmers markets) throughout August and September of 2019. These pop-ups were designed to share the Draft Plan Recommendations, answer questions, stimulate conversation and promote the opportunity to give detailed feedback online before the comment period ended on September 9th of 2019. The Community Meeting #3 boards were available at the pop-ups for information and to collect feedback.

WHERE & WHEN

Back to School Bash @ Turner-

Roberts Recreation Center

7201 Colony Loop Drive

August 2, 2019, 5:30pm – 7:30pm

Visitors Engaged: 50

Austin ISD Back to School Bash @

Palmer Events Center*

900 Barton Springs Road

August 3, 2019, 8am - 12pm

Visitors Engaged: 32

Jewish Community Center Splash

Day Back to School Pool Party*

7300 Hart Lane

August 4, 2019, 11am - 1pm

Visitors Engaged: 5

Burnet Middle School*

8401 Hathaway Drive

August 7, 2019, 12:30pm - 2pm

Visitors Engaged: 13

Circle C Community Center

7817 La Crosse Avenue

August 7, 2019, 6pm - 7:30pm

Visitors Engaged: 25

Dove Springs Advisory Board

Backpack Giveaway @ Mendez

Middle School*

5106 Village Square

August 10, 2019, 9am - 11am

Visitors Engaged: 15

Austin Pride Festival*

2101 Jesse Segovia Street

August 10, 2019, 11am - 7pm

Visitors Engaged: 53

Bartholomew Municipal Pool*

1800 E 51st Street

August 14, 2019, 5pm - 8pm

Visitors Engaged: 9

Northwest Family YMCA*

5807 McNeil Drive

August 27, 2019, 9:30am - 12pm

Visitors Engaged: 25

Southpark Meadows Common Area*

9500 S IH 35 Frontage Road

August 30, 2019, 4pm - 7pm

Visitors Engaged: 10

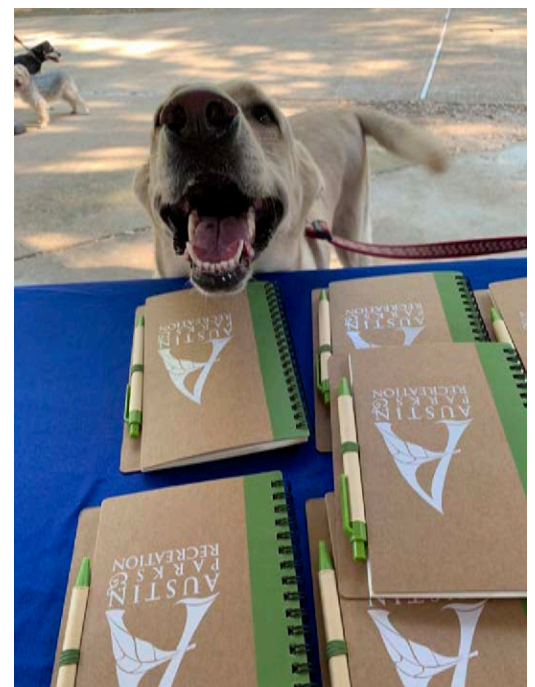
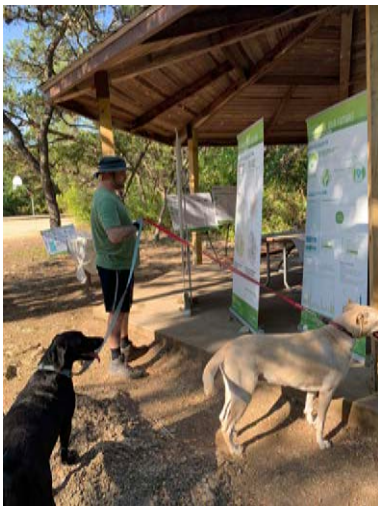
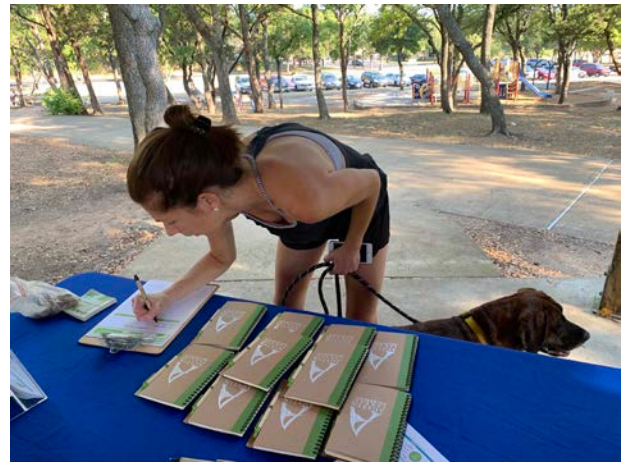
Longview Neighborhood Park Pavilion Area*

7609 Longview Road

September 7, 2019, 9am - 11am

Visitors Engaged: 11

* Indicates Adisa Communications attended; all others staffed by PARD



APPENDIX A

ENGAGEMENT LOCATIONS ON THE MAP

COMMUNITY MEETINGS AND POP-UPS

One of the goals of the engagement process was to hold community meetings and “pop-up” at events and locations throughout the city. PARD hosted open house style meetings and set up pop-ups in all ten council districts for each round of engagement.

APPENDIX B

ONLINE COMMUNITY SURVEY COMPREHENSIVE RESULTS

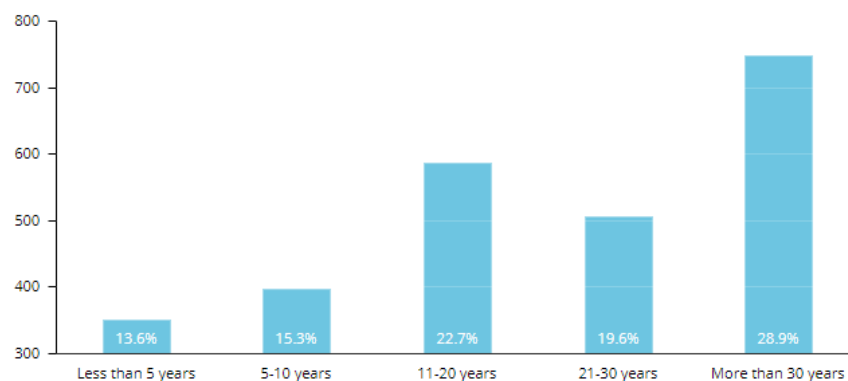
PHASE ONE

DEMOGRAPHICS

The following graphs and charts represent the demographic profile of Austin residents that submitted responses to the Online Community Survey.

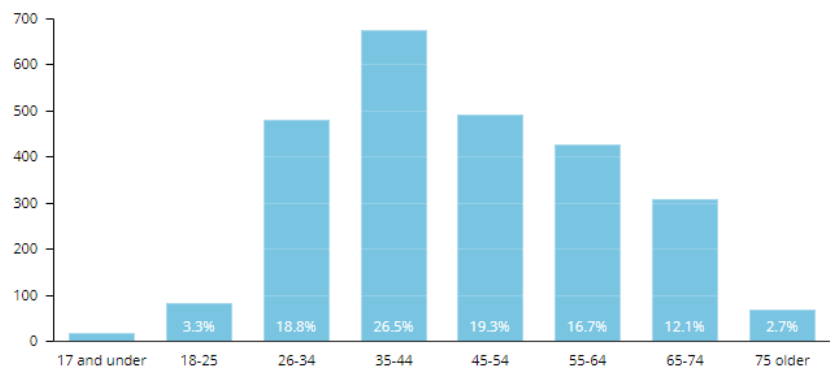
LENGTH OF AUSTIN RESIDENCE

2,571 RESPONDENTS



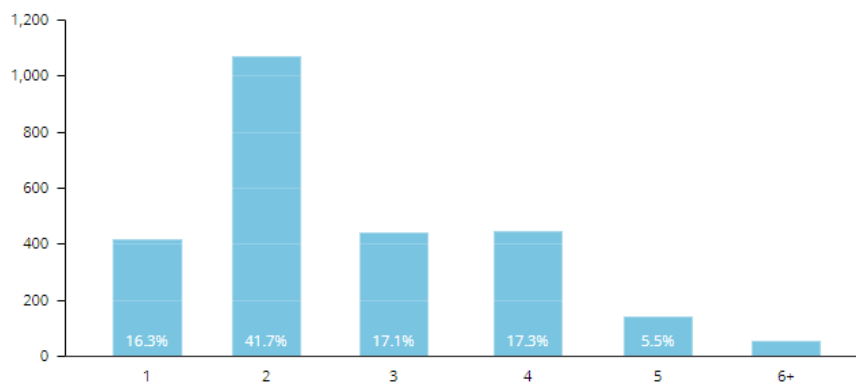
AGE

2,551 RESPONDENTS



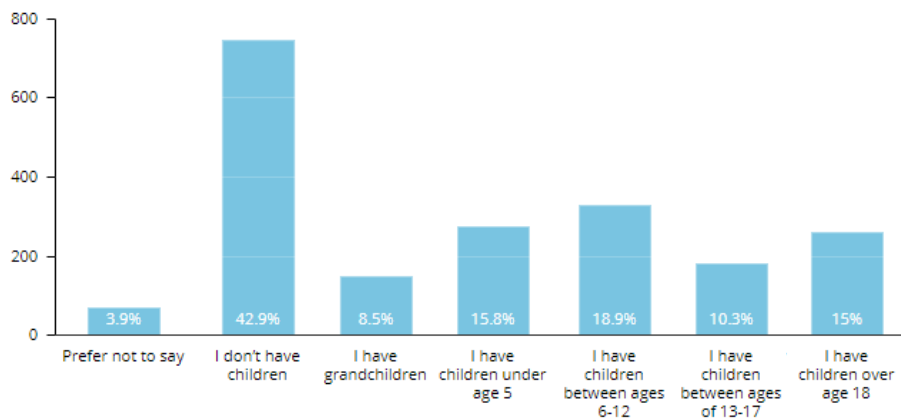
HOUSEHOLD SIZE

2,566 RESPONDENTS



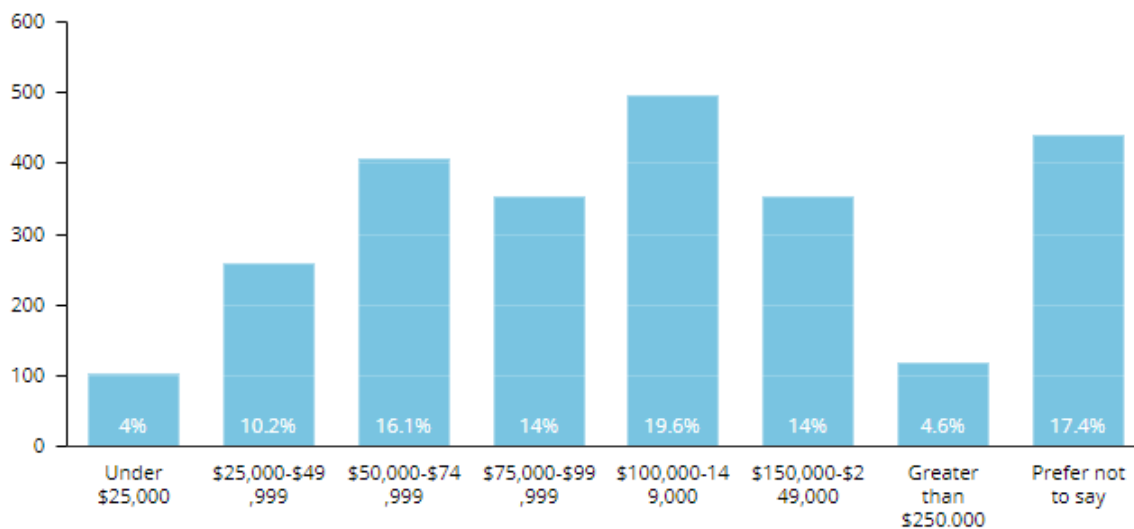
PARENTING STATUS

1,738 RESPONDENTS



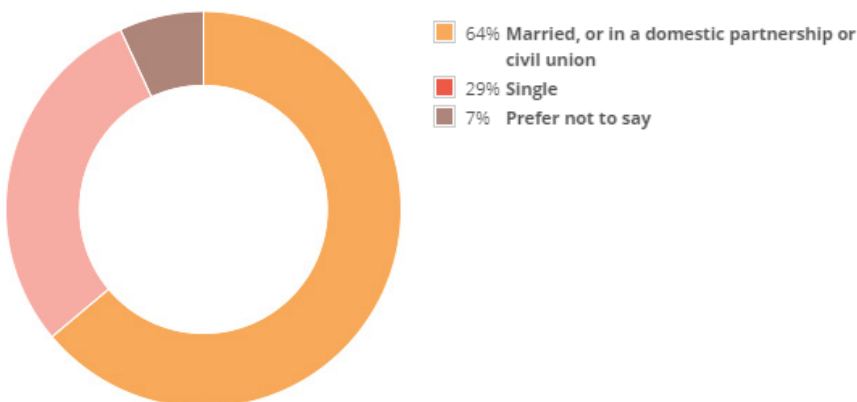
HOUSEHOLD INCOME

2,521 RESPONDENTS



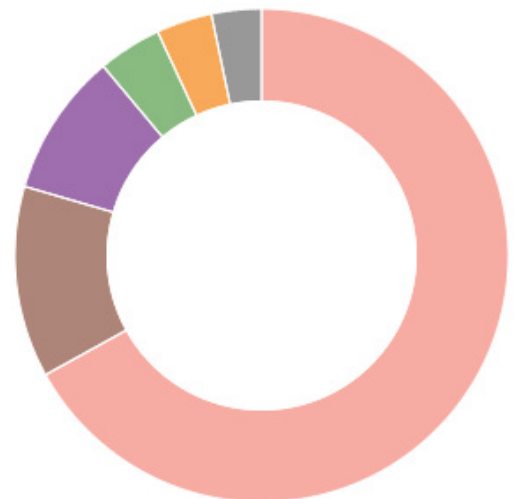
MARITAL STATUS

2,492 RESPONDENTS



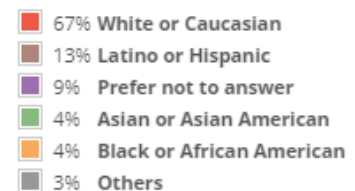
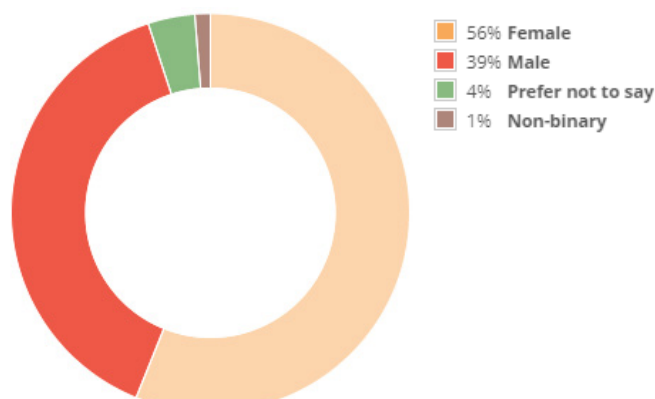
RACE/ETHNICITY

1,693 RESPONDENTS



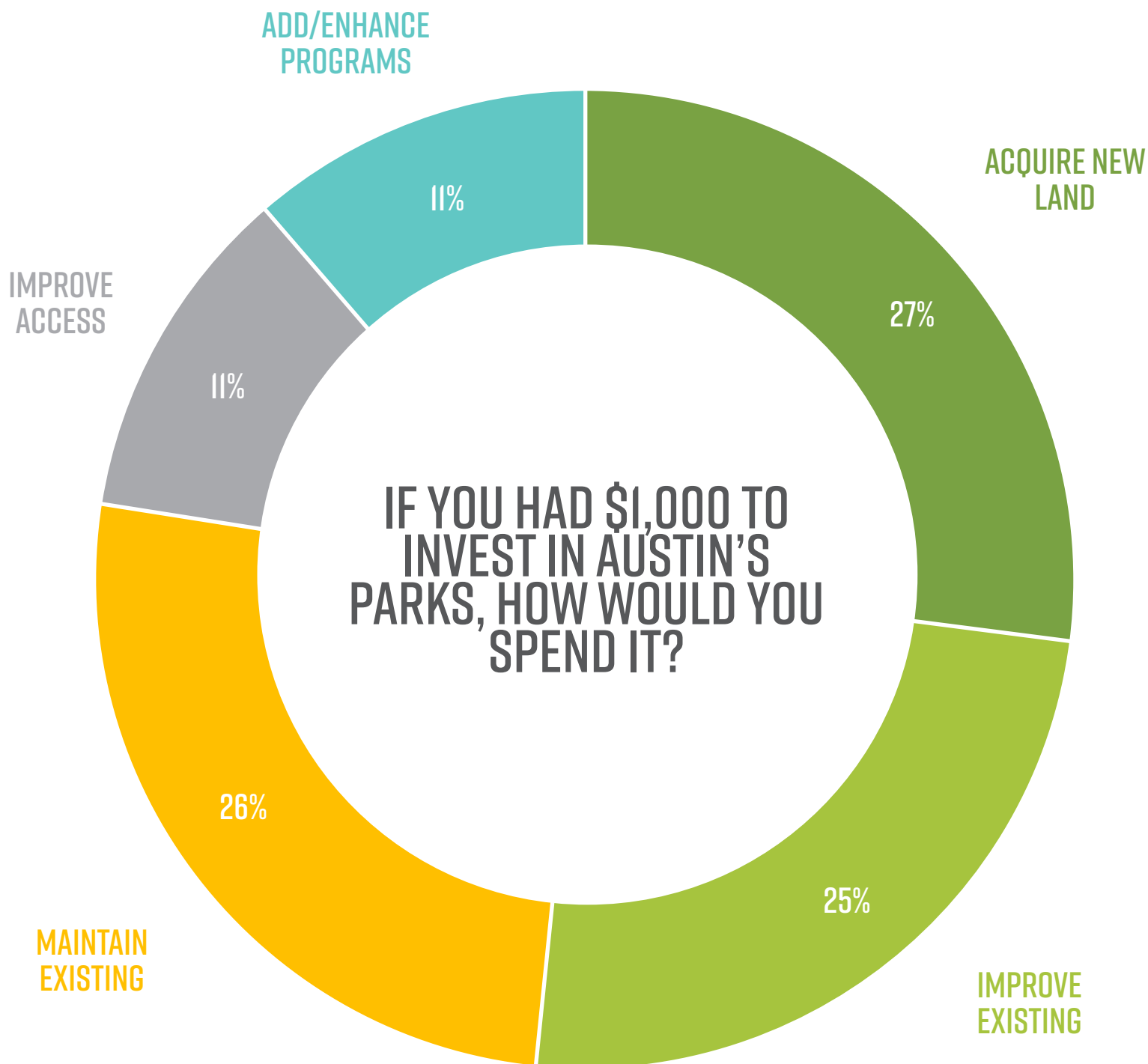
GENDER

1,756 RESPONDENTS



PARD SPENDING PRIORITIES

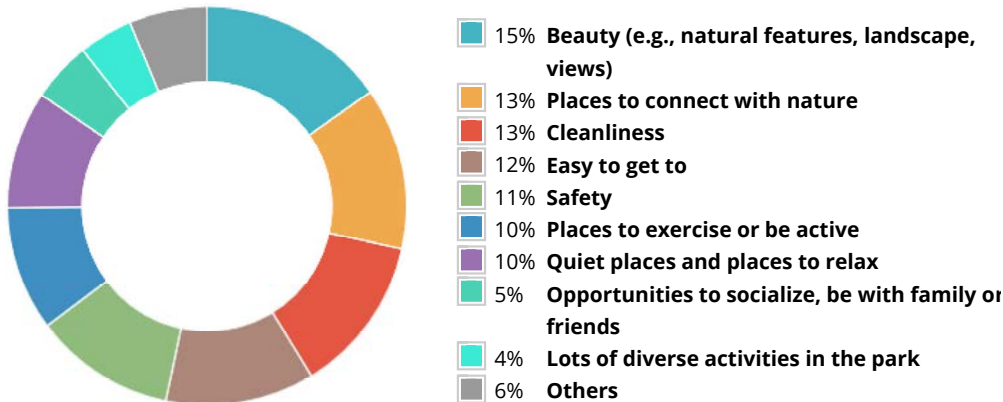
The following pie chart shows the composite outcome from both the pop-ups and the community meeting series (not the Online Community Survey).



GENERAL PARK USE & VALUE

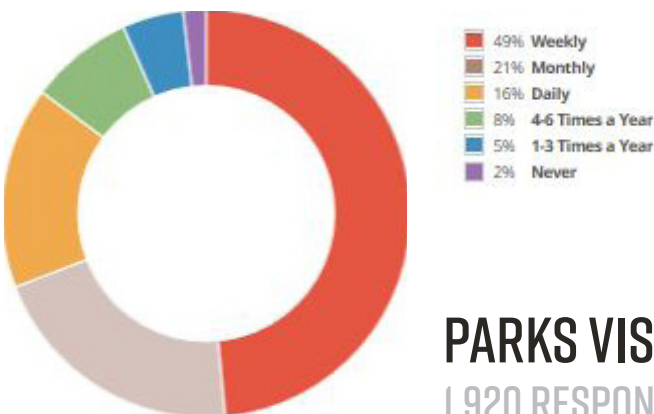
WHAT MAKES A PARK VALUABLE

2,616 RESPONDENTS



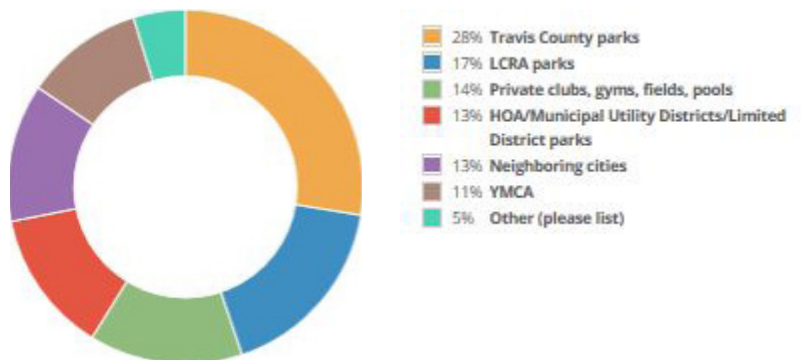
HOW OFTEN YOU VISIT THE PARKS

4,351 RESPONDENTS



PARKS VISITED OUTSIDE OF AUSTIN

1,920 RESPONDENTS



WHAT STOPS YOU FROM USING THE PARKS

2,236 RESPONDENTS



- 11% Crime or safety concerns
- 10% No parks or facilities close to home
- 10% Parks and facilities appear degraded and in poor condition
- 10% Inadequate parking
- 9% Presence of people experiencing homelessness
- 8% Lack of lighting
- 7% Parks and facilities do not appear clean
- 6% Lack of awareness of what programs are offered
- 5% Operating hours or length of season is too short
- 4% Entry fees at select sites, such as specialty pools
- 4% Other (please comment)
- 17% Others

PRIORITIES FOR PARK INVESTMENT

1,623 RESPONDENTS



- 21% Acquire land for parks and facilities in areas that lack parkland
- 20% Maintain existing parks and facilities
- 20% Improve access to parks and facilities through trails, sidewalks, bike lanes, safer crossings
- 19% Improve existing parks and facilities through new buildings, paving, trees, playgrounds
- 16% Add or enhance programs at parks and facilities (e.g., group exercise, arts and culture, education concerts, markets,)
- 3% Other (please comment)

BEST WAY TO FIND OUT ABOUT PARD EVENTS/PROGRAMS

2,500 RESPONDENTS

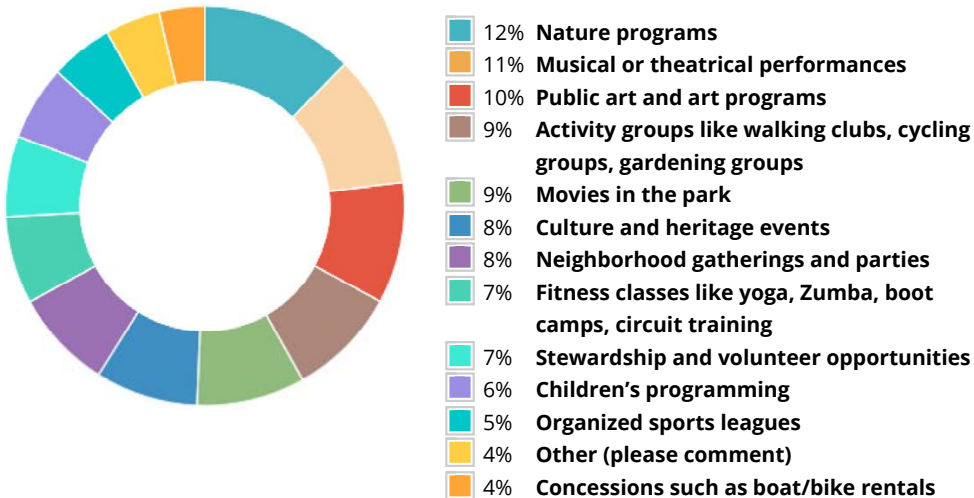


- 17% Email
- 15% PARD Social Media (Facebook, Twitter)
- 13% PARD Website
- 13% NextDoor
- 11% Word of Mouth / Other organizations
- 9% TV / Radio
- 9% City of Austin Website
- 6% Newspaper
- 5% Flyers / Posters
- 3% Others

RECREATION & PROGRAM PREFERENCES

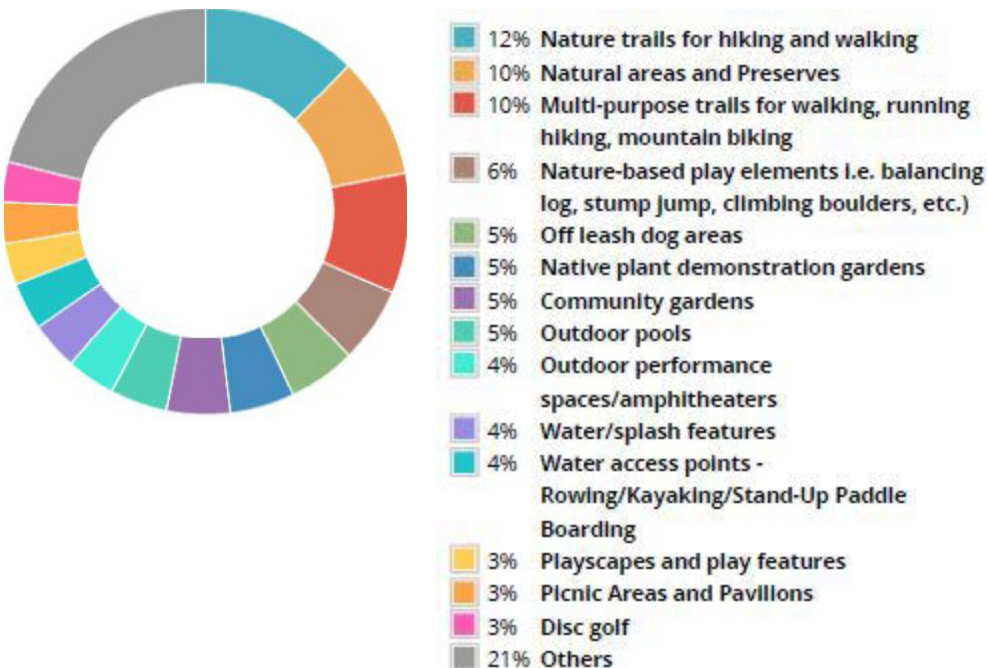
PROGRAMS THAT WOULD KEEP YOU AT A PARK MORE

3,004 RESPONDENTS



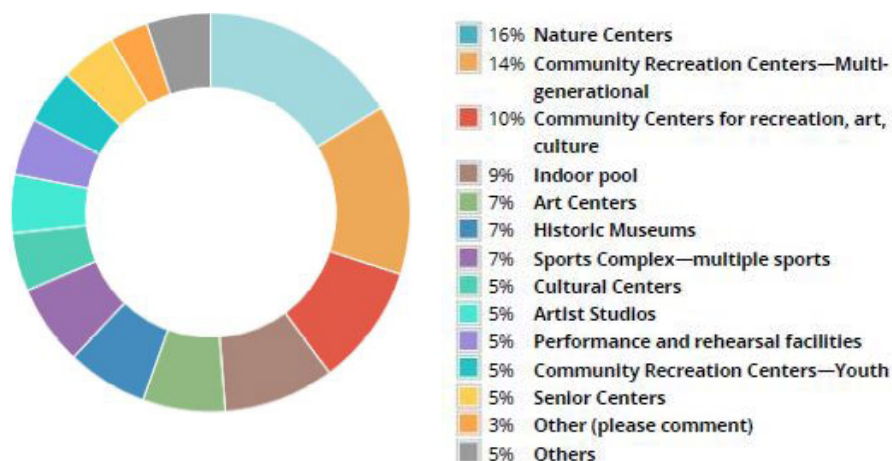
PROGRAM OPTIONS YOU WANT IN THE NEXT 10 YEARS

2,981 RESPONDENTS



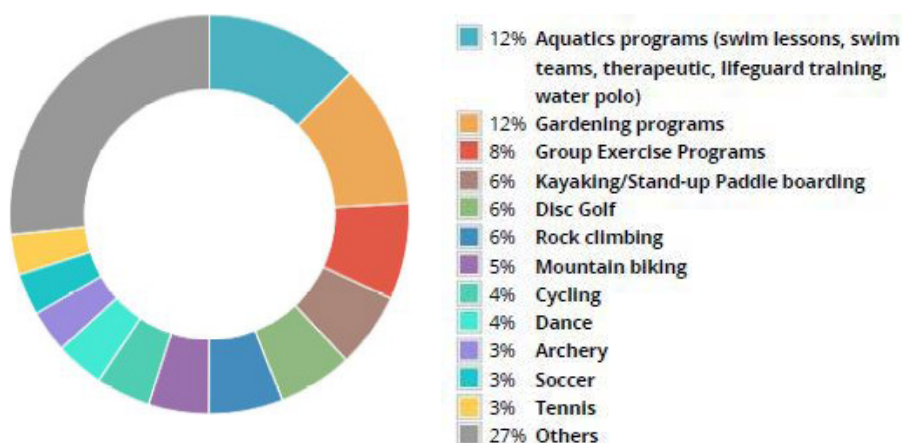
FACILITIES YOU WANT IN THE NEXT 10 YEARS

2,567 RESPONDENTS



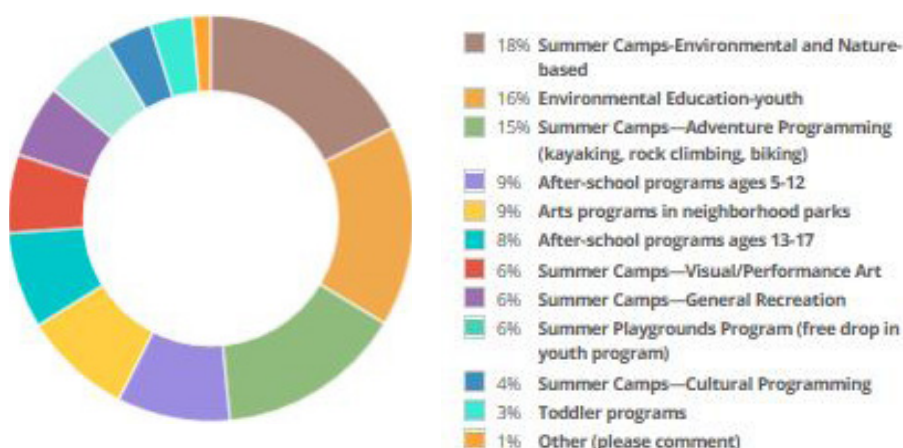
SPORTS PROGRAMS YOU WANT IN THE NEXT 10 YEARS

2,682 RESPONDENTS



YOUTH PROGRAMS YOU WANT IN THE NEXT 10 YEARS

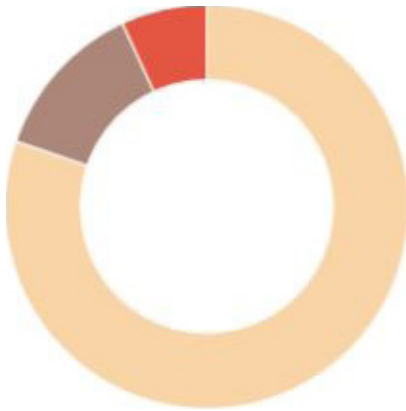
2,357 RESPONDENTS



FACILITY PREFERENCES

DOWNTOWN & URBAN SPACES

793 RESPONDENTS



- 80% Republic Square
- 13% Wooldridge Square
- 7% Brush Square

COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTERS

724 RESPONDENTS



- 13% Hancock Recreation Center
- 13% Northwest Recreation Center
- 12% South Austin Recreation Center
- 11% COA/YMCA North Austin Community Recreation Center
- 9% Austin Recreation Center
- 9% Dittmar Recreation Center
- 4% Dove Springs Recreation Center
- 4% Gustavo "Gus" L. Garcia Recreation Center
- 3% Dottle Jordan Recreation Center
- 20% Others

TENNIS CENTERS

426 RESPONDENTS



- 34% South Austin Tennis Center
- 30% Austin High Tennis Center
- 21% Caswell Tennis Center
- 15% Burnett "Blondie" Pharr Tennis Center

CULTURAL/HISTORIC FACILITIES

982 RESPONDENTS



- 16% Zilker Botanical Garden
- 12% Umlauf Sculpture Garden
- 12% Mayfield Park
- 11% Dougherty Arts Center
- 10% Austin Nature and Science Center
- 9% Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Centers
- 8% George Washington Carver Museum and Cultural Center
- 8% Elisabet Ney Museum
- 6% Covert Park at Mt. Bonnell
- 5% Asian American Resource Center
- 4% Others

CEMETERIES

291 RESPONDENTS



- 42% Austin Memorial Park Cemetery
- 25% Oakwood Cemetery
- 12% Oakwood Annex Cemetery
- 12% Evergreen Cemetery
- 8% Plummers Cemetery

SPECIAL/ATHLETICS/RECREATION

551 RESPONDENTS



- 40% Red Bud Isle
- 19% Krieg Fields
- 10% Mabel Davis BMX Skate Park
- 9% Walsh Boat Landing
- 8% Heath Eiland and Morgan Moss BMX Skate Park
- 7% Montopolis Practice Field
- 7% Onion Creek Soccer Complex

SENIOR CENTERS

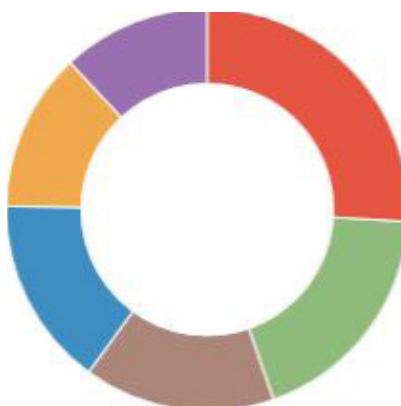
443 RESPONDENTS



- 39% South Austin Senior Activity Center
- 37% Lamar Senior Activity Center
- 24% Conley-Guerrero Senior Activity Center

GOLF COURSES

397 RESPONDENTS

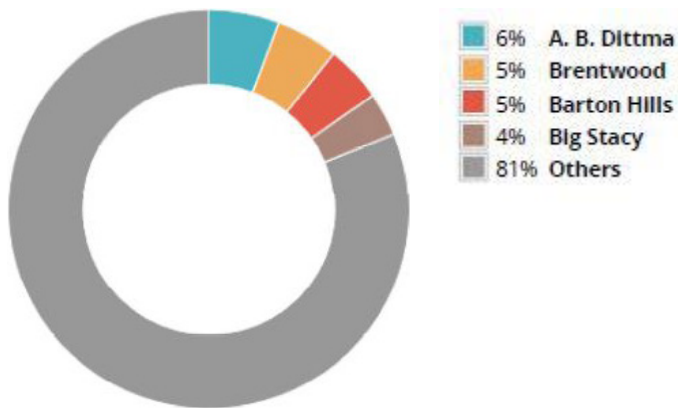


- 26% Hancock Golf Course
- 19% Lions Municipal Golf Course
- 15% Jimmy Clay Golf Course
- 15% Morris Williams Golf Course
- 13% Grey Rock Golf Course
- 12% Roy Kizer Golf Course

NEIGHBORHOOD PARK PREFERENCES

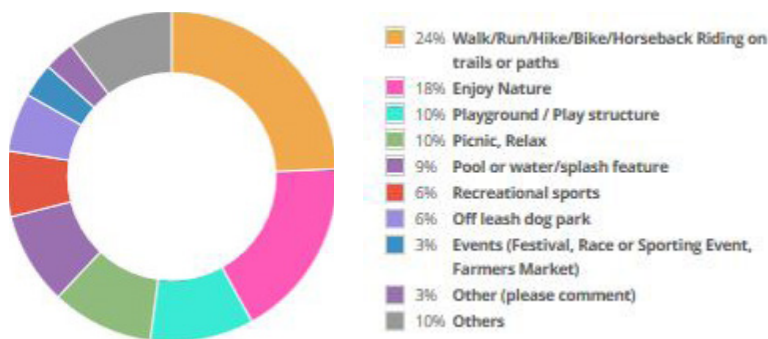
NEIGHBORHOOD/SCHOOL/POCKET PARKS YOU FREQUENT THE MOST

1,906 RESPONDENTS



FAVORITE THING TO DO AT THESE PARKS

1,830 RESPONDENTS



WHAT YOU WANT MORE OF IN THESE PARKS

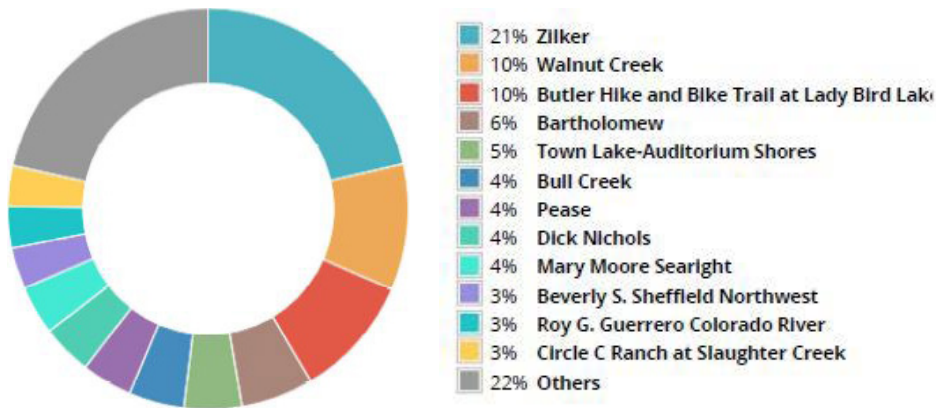
1,592 RESPONDENTS



DISTRICT PARK PREFERENCES

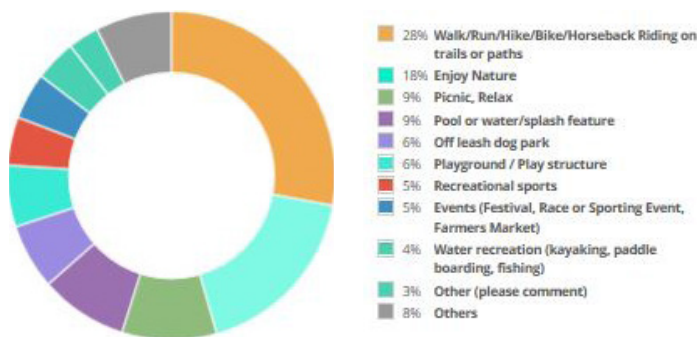
DISTRICT/METROPOLITAN PARKS YOU FREQUENT THE MOST

2,098 RESPONDENTS



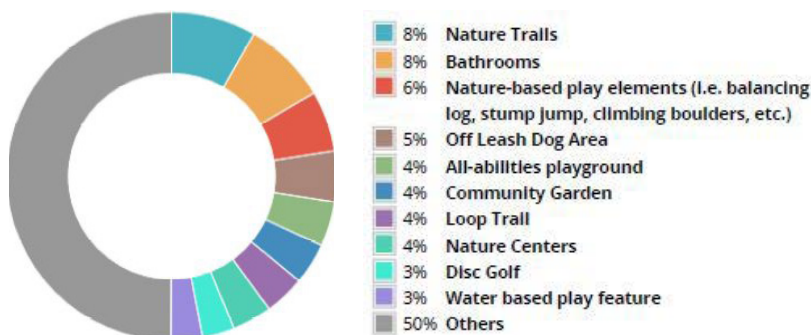
FAVORITE THING TO DO AT THESE PARKS

1,881 RESPONDENTS



WHAT YOU WANT MORE OF IN THESE PARKS

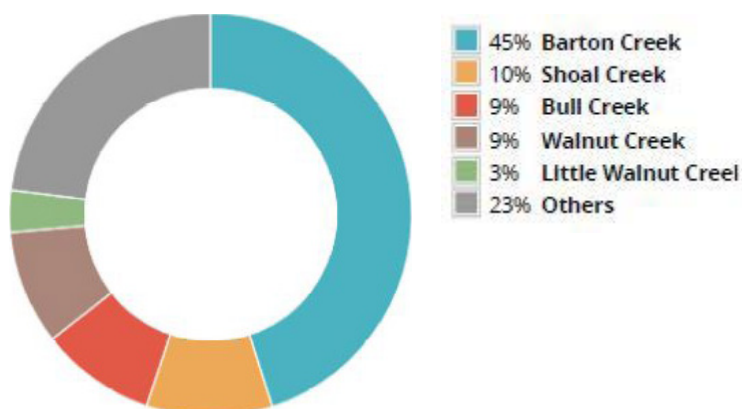
1,704 RESPONDENTS



GREENBELT PARK PREFERENCES

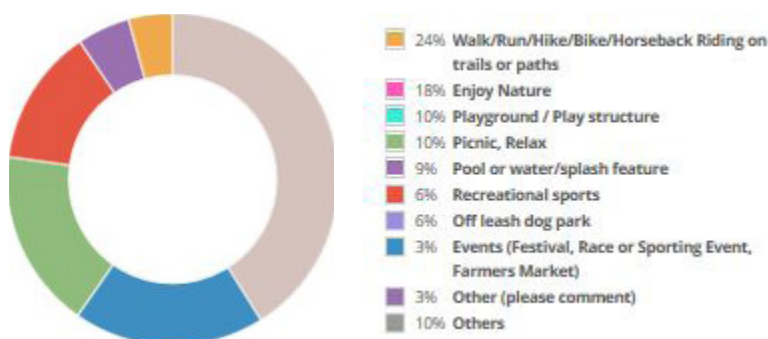
GREENBELTS/GREENWAYS YOU FREQUENT THE MOST

1,762 RESPONDENTS



WHAT YOU WANT MORE OF IN THESE PARKS

1,368 RESPONDENTS



APPENDIX C

COMMUNITY MEETING SERIES #1 DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY

PHASE ONE

PARTICIPANTS

141

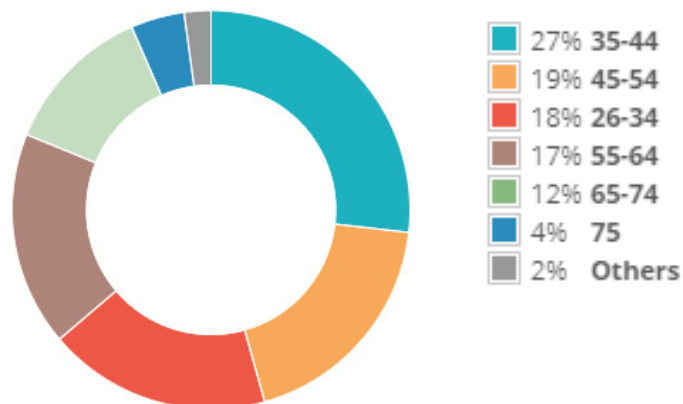
RESPONSES

1,299

COMMENTS

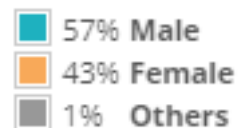
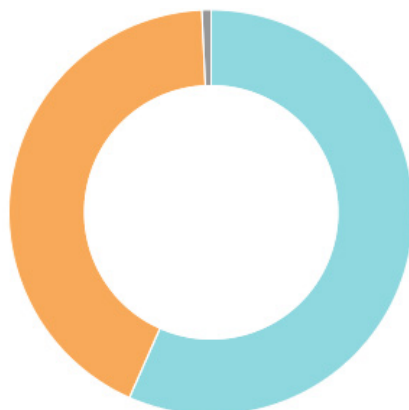
81

AGE 138 RESPONSES



GENDER

136 RESPONSES



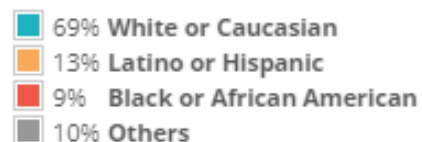
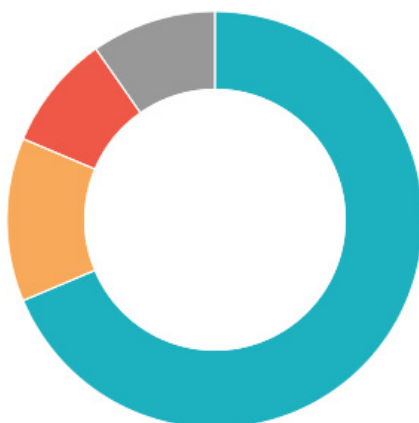
TIME LIVING IN AUSTIN

133 RESPONSES



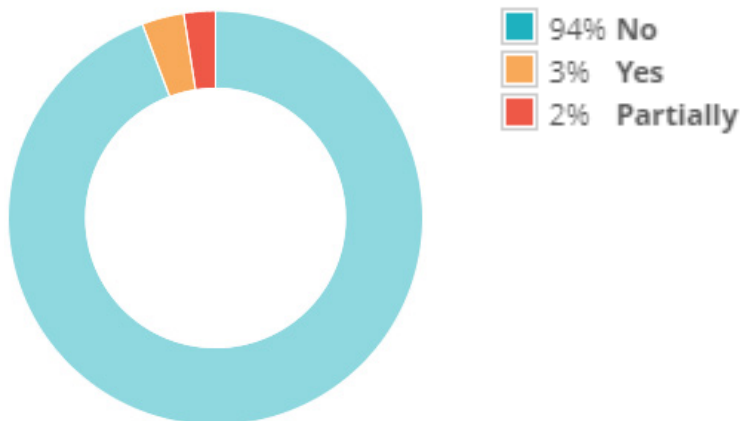
RACE/ETHNICITY

134 RESPONSES



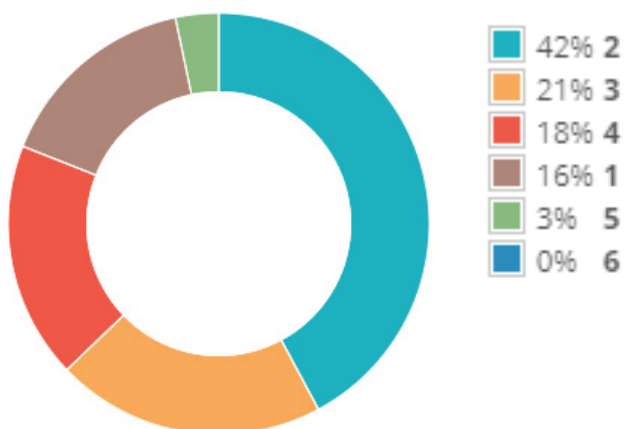
DISABILITY

122 RESPONSES



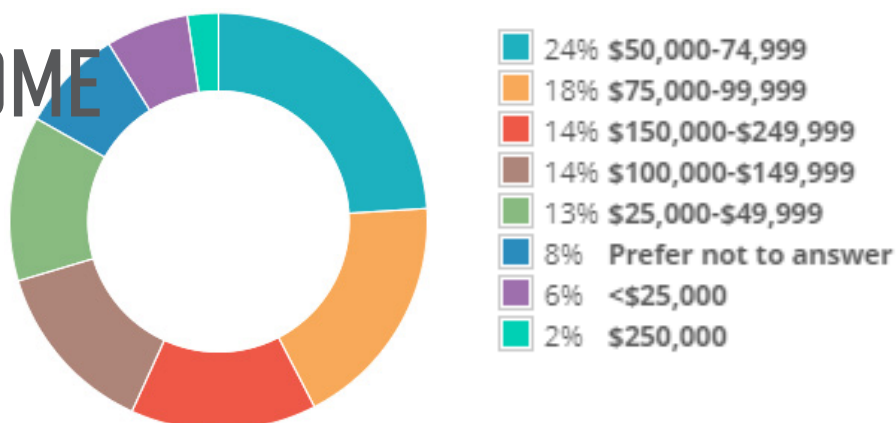
HOUSEHOLD SIZE

121 RESPONSES



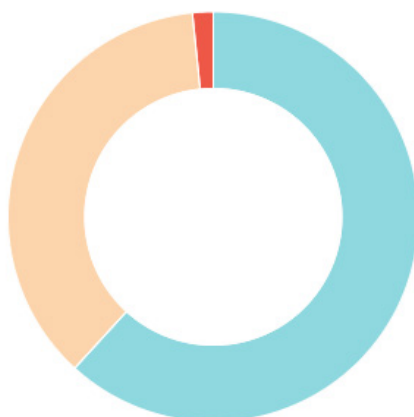
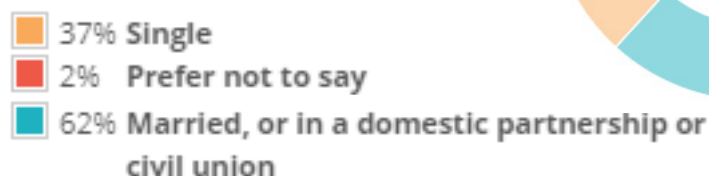
HOUSEHOLD INCOME

125 RESPONSES



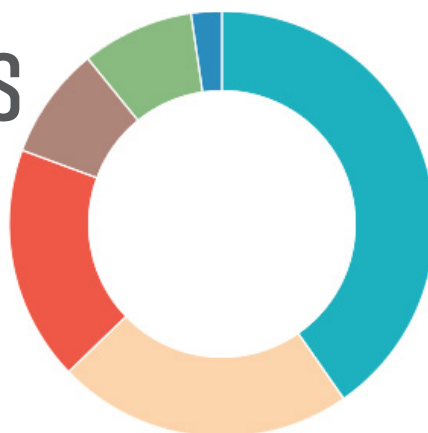
MARITAL STATUS

123 RESPONSES



PARENTING STATUS

118 RESPONSES



MEETING NUMBER

138 RESPONSES

